

SERMONS

BY THE

Reverend and Learned Mr. *William Wilson*, late Minister of the Gospel at *Perth*, viz.

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| I. The Church's Extremity Christ's Opportunity. | IV. The Watchman's Duty and Desire. |
| II. The Lamb's Retinue attending him whithersoever he goeth. | V. Stedfastness in the Faith recommended. |
| III. The Father's Promise to the Son, a clear Bow in the Church's darkest Cloud. | VI. The Blessedness lost in the first <i>Adam</i> , to be found in <i>Christ</i> , the second <i>Adam</i> . |

Entered in Stationers-Hall.



EDINBURGH,

Printed for *David Duncan* at the Weigh-House in *Edinburgh*, and for *John Henderson* in *Abernethy's* and sold by the Booksellers in Town and County.
1748.



The CHURCH's Extremity
CHRIST's Opportunity.

A
S E R M O N

Preached upon *Monday*, immediately
after the Celebration of the Sacra-
ment of the Lord's Supper at *Aber-*
nethy, *July 17. 1738.*

*By the late REVEREND and LEARNED Mr. WILLIAM
WILSON Minister of the Gospel at Perth.*

Carefully revised by a reverend Member of the As-
sociate Synod.



E D I N B U R G H,

Printed for *David Duncan*, and Sold at his House,
opposite to the *Weigh-House*, North Side of the
Street. MDCCLVII.



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MICAH iv. 10.

Be in Pain, and labour to bring forth, O Daughter of Zion, like a Woman in Travail, for now shalt thou go forth out of the City, thou shalt dwell in the Field, and thou shalt go even to Babylon, there shalt thou be delivered, there the Lord shall redeem thee from the Hand of thine Enemies.

IT is in the middle Clause of the Verse I design to insist upon, *And thou shalt go even to Babylon, there shalt thou be delivered.*

My Friends, when we are met together about the solemn Worship of God, we are to remember it is a great Point in Worship, to have the solid Faith of the great Object of divine Worship. We are a worshipping Assembly, one of the Assemblies of Mount Zion; and, O that we had the lively Impression of that God whom we profess to worship: Without Faith it is impossible to please God; our Worship is but dead Worship without Faith; our Worship is but formal Worship without Faith; yea, let me tell you, our Worship is no Worship at all, in the Sight of God, without Faith. We are one of the Assemblies of Mount Zion, of the Gospel Church, met together upon a very solemn Occasion. Yesterday

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we were commemorating the Death of Christ in the Sacrament of the Supper, and we are now assembled this Day to offer up the spiritual Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving unto him, to bless our God aloud. My Friends, have we not much Matter and Ground of Praise? I dare say, that those among you, who are in the darkest Case, in the deadeſt Case, under the heaviest Complaint with Reference to themselves, with Reference to their own spiritual Case and Condition, have yet Matter and Ground of Praise. Are you ſaying, *Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left Hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the Right-Hand that I cannot see him.* Why, be it ſo, Sirs; you have yet Matter and Ground of Praise. Have you not Reason to ſay, *Thou art righteous when thou pleadeſt with me, when thou hideſt thy Face from me, when thou covereſt thyſelf with a Cloud.* Sirs, if there is a Frame of Spirit in you to juſtify God, and condemn yourſelves, it is a good Diſpoſition of Spirit, it is a Bow in your Cloud, when he is hiding his Face from you. Again, is it not Ground and Matter of Praise, that you are not in the bottomleſs Pit, that you are not in Hell? I am ſure, if you are rightly exerciſed, you will reckon it a Mercy that ye have Access to look towards God's holy Temple, it is a Mercy that the Cup of vindictive Wrath is not put into your Hand. This indeed ſays, that he hath not dealt with you according to your Sins, nor rewarded you according to your Iniquities. Well, in your loweſt Case, may it not be a Note of Praise to you, *He dealt not with us according to your Sins, &c.* In a Word, if you are complaining that you cannot find him in the Sacrament; nor in the Word, ye are juſt the worſt in the World,

World, ye have the most unbelieving Heart, the most obstinate Heart, the most hard Heart, and the most atheistical Heart in the World; ye are saying, There is none like you; ye are saying, It may be there is something peculiar in your Case, that is not to be found in the Case of another, none like you, no Case like yours in this whole Assembly: Yet we tell you, there is still Matter and Ground of Praise, that there is Balm in *Gilead*, and that there is a Physician there. It is Matter and Ground of Praise to you, that Christ lives; that tho' he was dead, now he is alive again, and liveth for evermore, and hath the Keys of Hell and of Death. It is Matter and Ground of Praise, and that in the very worst Case amongst you, the most singular Case out of the bottomless Pit, that Christ is a Physician, that Christ is a Helper in the very greatest Extremity. Is thy Case a singular Case? Christ is a singular Physician, Christ is a singular Saviour, Christ is a singular Remedy, Christ is a singular Help, a matchless and a none-such Help, whatever your Case is. Here then is Matter and Ground of Praise, that the Lord hath visited *Adam's Family*. I remember to have read in the Diary of an eminent Christian; who, falling under a Cloud, called all in Question that ever God had done for him. He began to think God had visited *Adam's Family*. There is a Remnant of *Adam's Family* that he hath redeemed to himself: *I will try to bless him.* (said he) *that he hath redeemed a Company out of Adam's Family, tho' I cannot say I am among them.* The honest Man went about to mint at Praising, and when he is doing so, it pleased the Lord to make him apply and act Faith upon it as to himself, and made him say, *Thou wast slain and hast redeemed me to God by thy Blood.* Well, bless God that the Day-Spring
from

from on high hath visited our Tribe and Family, and perhaps he will lead you on to say he hath visited you, and redeemed you by his Blood. Bless God that he hath made the Light to shine, and sent his Son to bless us, in turning every one of us from our Iniquities. What say you, I cannot bless him, I have neither Heart for Prayer nor Praise? Why, then, you are in the best Tune to go to the Physician. It is best to go poor and empty-handed to Christ. Go, as you are poor and miserable, unable to do any Thing for Christ, or for God. Spread the Case out before him who is the Redeemer, come to turn away Ungodliness from Jacob. He is a wonderful and only Help, upon whom all our Help is laid. Well, let us have our Eyes to him, and let us essay to give Thanks to him on a Thanksgiving-Day, on a parting Day from this Place, sometimes such a Day has been found a good Day, a convincing Day, a converting Day, a confirming Day, a comforting Day. The Residue of the Spirit is with our Lord; let us have our Eyes to him, that he may send him to bless his own Word we are to deliver to you this Day.

In the first Part of this Chapter where our Text lies, the glorious Advancement and Enlargement of the Church, in New Testament Times, is foretold by the Prophet Micah, as in the first Verse, *But in the last Days it shall come to pass, that the Mountain of the House of the Lord shall be established in the Top of the Mountains, and it shall be exalted above the Hills, and People shall flow unto it: and many Nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob, &c.* It is a Prophecy of the Gathering of the Nations to Shiloh, of the Gathering of many Nations to the Lord Christ; that Nations shall stir

up

up one another to join themselves unto glorious
 Christ. Also, in the latter Part of the Chapter,
 particularly in the Verse that I have read, ye have
 the happy Issue of the Church's Trial, the Issue of
 the Trial of the Daughter of Zion; tho' she may
 be brought low, yet she shall have a glorious Issue
 to all her sore Conflicts and Trials. In the Words
 I have read, the sore Conflicts of the Church are
 compared to the Sorrow and Travail of a Woman
 in Child-bearing. Mark it, they are not like the
 Agonies of dying Men, but like the Pain and Tra-
 vail of a Woman, which issues in a happy Birth.
 A Woman, when she is in Travail, she has Sor-
 row, because her Hour is come; but, as soon as she
 is delivered of the Child, she remembreth no more
 the Anguish, for Joy that a Man-Child is born into
 the World. But tho' the Church has her sore
 Conflicts and Pangs, yet they are promising Pangs
 and Throws, even as the Woman's. They are
 Pangs that have a promising and glorious Issue:
 Therefore, I say, the Church being in Pain, la-
 bours to bring forth, like a Woman in Travail.
 Again, in the following Verse, ye may observe, that
 the Church's Troubles may rise high, the Floods
 they may swell, the Lord's People (the Daughter
 of Zion) may have Trouble and Trial to the great-
 est Extremity measured out unto them: *Therefore,*
saith the Prophet, thou shalt go forth out of the City,
and thou shalt dwell in the Field. By these several
 Expressions the Church's extreme Troubles and
 Trials are held forth by the Prophet. *There is a*
gradual Rise of her Trial; first, Thou shalt go forth
out of the City. By the City we are to understand
Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the Place of their sacred
 Solemnities, there was the Place of their publick
 Worship; also Jerusalem was the Seat of their
 publick

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publick Courts of Justice ; *for there are set Thrones of Judgment, the Thrones of the House of David,* says the Psalmist, *Psalm cxlii. 5. Thou shalt dwell in the Field ; that is, thou shalt be stript naked of all thy spiritual Privileges in this thy City, and shalt be even thrust out of thy City. But this is not all, Thou shalt even go to Babylon ; thou shalt fall under the Feet of thine Enemies, the Enemy shall for a Time get his Will of the Daughter of Zion ; Thou shalt even go to Babylon. Ye know, Sirs, what is intended by Babylon. That City, the Mistress of the then known World, famous for her Tyranny and Oppression, in oppressing the People of God. In the 17th Chapter of the Book of the Revelation, she is called, Mystery, Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth.*

But again, in the next Place, as the Church is brought into these Straits, sent out of the City, made to dwell in the Field, brought under the Feet of her Enemies, so ye may observe the glorious Deliverance she meets with in this Extremity : *There shalt thou be delivered.* Ye would have thought it would been said, *There shalt thou be destroyed ; There a full End shall be made of thee.* But, instead of that, Deliverance is insured unto the Church ; it is insured in the Word of Grace and Promise, by the Promise of him who cannot lie. *There shalt thou be delivered.* Ye may notice that the Deliverance is to be given even from Babylon ; *There shalt thou be delivered.* The plain Meaning is, just when thou art brought to the greatest Pinch of Extremity, then in the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen ; then the sacred Proverb shall be verified, **JEHOVAH-JIREH,** *in the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen. Thou shalt go even to Babylon, and there shalt*

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shalt thou be delivered. When, upon the Matter, all seems to be lost and gone, then Deliverance shall come unto thee; *there shalt thou be delivered*; there, in thy utmost Pinch and Strait, Sovereignty shall appear for thee for thy Delivery. Before I pass on to the Doctrine, I observe, by the Way, that the Deliverance from *Babylon*, it is held forth in Scripture under two Things.

1st. As a Type of the Redemption of the whole Church and People of God, from the Tyranny and Bondage of Sin and Satan, by the great Redeemer, the Lord Christ. The spiritual Redemption of his People is held forth by the Redemption given by *Joshua*, and by their Deliverance from the Captivity in *Babylon*, at the End of the threescore and ten Years in which he had Indignation. Again,

2^{dly}. This Deliverance from *Babylon* is held forth as a Type of that glorious Deliverance that the New Testament Church, in the latter Days, shall obtain from mystical *Babylon*, from Antichristian Tyranny and Idolatry. Hence, in the 18th Chapter of the Book of the *Revelation*, and 2^d Verse of that Chapter, *Babylon* the great is said to be fallen, and shall rise no more. But I do not insist farther on any Explication of the Words.

I proceed to draw a plain doctrinal Proposition from them, and in the Prosecution of which I resolve to offer a very few Thoughts.

Doct. That the greatest Extremity the Church and People of God may be brought into, makes Way for a glorious Deliverance unto her. On thus, That the Church and People of God are sometimes brought into the greatest Extremity, that her Deliverance may be the more conspicuous and glorious.

Thou shalt go even to Babylon, and there shalt thou be delivered. The Lord brings his Church and People to very great Extremities, and then just steps in for their Relief and Deliverance, according to that sacred Proverb I cited already, *In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen.* The Scripture is full of Instances of this Kind : As for Example, when the Church was in *Egypt*, what a great Extremity was she in ? She cries out under her Bondage, in that 3d Chapter of *Exodus* ; and behold, when she is brought into an Extremity, the Lord brings about a wonderful Deliverance for her. In like Manner also, in *Hezekiah's Days*, in the 37th Chapter of the Prophecies of the Prophet *Isaiah*, the Church, in his Time, is brought to such an Extremity, that he cries out, *This Day is a Day of Trouble, and of Rebuke, and of Blasphemy, for the Children are come to the Birth, and there is not Strength to bring forth.* So the Lord makes a surprising Appearance, and works a great Deliverance for his Church and People, even in the Days of this King, when she was so very low. Consider, my Friends what a low Pass the Church was in, when the Prince of Life was lying in the Grave. Then the Church was scattered, and brought to the lowest Extremity, yet this did issue in the most glorious Day that ever the Church of Christ did see. Then out of *Zion* came forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from *Jerusalem* ; then came the Fountain out from the House of the Lord, and watered the Valley of *Shittim* : That glorious Deliverance is the Foundation of all the after Deliverances to the Church and People of God. But, not to insist, all I intend upon the Doctrine, is,

In the first Place, to offer some Remarks concerning those extreme Straits that the Church and People

People of God may be brought into before Deliverance come. *2dly.* Give the Reasons why the Church and People of God are brought into such extreme Straits. *3dly.* Observe some of the remarkable Deliverances the Lord gives to the Daughter of *Zion*, when she is brought to *Babylon*, or to those extreme Straits or Difficulties. And then, in the *4th* and *last* Place, make some practical Use and Improvement of the Subject.

I return then to the *first* of these, *namely*, to offer some Remarks concerning those extreme Straits that the Church and People of God may be brought into.

In the *first* Place, I remark, that as the Church may be brought into extreme Straits before Deliverance come, so all the Children that are brought forth in *Zion*, they are sometimes brought into extreme Straits; as, in the *first* Place, they are brought into extreme Straits at their Birth; *2dly.* Sometimes they are brought into extreme Straits after their Birth.

In the *first* Place, I say, they are brought to extreme Straits in their spiritual Birth. Those that are brought forth in *Zion*, the Lord makes a fearful Work in less or more in their Consciences; the Terror of the Lord takes hold on them; they are brought to the Foot of Mount *Sinai*; the awful Thunder of Mount *Sinai* thunders on their Hearts, and here some of them are kept under the Spirit of Bondage for a considerable Time. One of which the Apostle *Paul* seems to have been; he seems to have had something of this exemplified in himself, when the Lord appeared to him in his Way to *Damascus*. He was struck down to the Ground, struck blind for some Days, till *Ananias* came to him with a Message of Deliverance from God. It is ordinary that the Children of God, in such a Case

Cases as this, are under extreme Fears with respect to the Issue of their Distress; they are under extreme Temptations; Satan is permitted to attack the Soul with his fiery Darts, and fiery Temptations, in so much that the Soul, in this, or such a Case as this, is brought to draw the Conclusion, as if their Case were desperate. Sometimes, before the Delivery, the Soul is brought to the very Borders of Desperation. Thus, I say, those who are the Children of Zion are brought to an Extremity in their spiritual Birth, before the Lord give a Delivery to them, before the Lord Christ be revealed in them, before the Gospel sound in their Hearts: They are brought to Mount Sinai before they are brought to Mount Zion; and when, in such a Case as this, the Lord is pleased sometimes to appear remarkably for them, in their Straits to scatter their Clouds, and to clear their Sky, by manifesting his Christ unto them, thus they are brought unto Babylon, and there they are delivered.

Again, 2dly. Those Children that are born in Zion, they may have extreme Straits after their spiritual Birth, after they are regenerated: They may fall under extreme Straits, sometimes of one Kind, and sometimes of another; they may, and often do fall into the extreme Strait of the Sense of Distance from God, the extreme Strait of the Fear of eternal Wrath; tho' this is their Sin. Legal Terrors may take hold on their Consciences after Regeneration, as in the Instance of Heman in the 88th Psalm and 15th. Verse, *I am afflicted, and ready to die from my Youth up: While I suffer thy Terrors I am distracted.* The Lord's People, after their spiritual Birth, may be brought under extreme Temptations. The Apostle, in writing to the believing Ephesians, exhorting them, Chapter 6th and Verse 11th, to *put on the whole Armour*

of God, that they may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil, gives us to understand, that even Believers themselves, Persons who are born again, may be attacked with the fiery Darts of the Devil. Farther, the Lord's People, after their spiritual Birth, may be brought to the extreme Strait of Desertion, and the hiding of God's Countenance. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself drank deep of this Cup, and that for the Sake of all his little Ones, *Psalms* xxii. 1. compared with *Matthew* xxvii. 46. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!* Again, the Lord's People, even after Regeneration, may bring themselves into extreme Straits by their Backsliding from the Lord, in so much that they may need a Sight of their first Conversion! Hence we find the Psalmist praying, *Psalms* li. 10. *Create in me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.* They may be brought into such an extreme Strait, that they may be just withering and dying, just expiring; yea more, they may apprehend themselves dead, cut off for their Parts, as in that 37th Chapter of *Ezekiel*, and 11th Verse, *Behold they say, our Bones are dried, our Hope is lost, we are cut off for our Parts.* To these, and such like extreme Straits, I say, the Lord's People may be brought, even after they are born in *Zion*; and I am much afraid, my Friends, this is in a great Measure your Case. There is Ground to apprehend it is the Case of the Lord's Remnant at this Day, that they are brought to the extreme Strait of Distance from God, in their Apprehension; to the extreme Strait of a Devilish and unwarrantable Fear of eternal Wrath; to the extreme Strait of Temptations and Attacks from *Satan*; to the extreme Strait of Desertion and the hiding of God's Countenance; and that they are in many

many such like Cases. But is there not a Bow in the Cloud? Why, there is just Help in the Lord for such Extremities. When the Church in general, or a Soul in particular, is brought into the greatest Extremity, then, even then, he gives Enlargement to the Church or to the Soul: *Thou shalt go even to Babylon, and there shalt thou be delivered.* To excite your Faith and Hope of this Deliverance, when ye are brought to cry, *Our Bones are dried, our Hope is lost, and we are cut off for our Parts,* consider what you heard on Saturday, namely, that Christ is the Resurrection and the Life, and so, of consequence, there is Redemption and Deliverance in him, and in him for you.

But then, again, in the *second* Place, upon this Head, I remark, that sometimes Zion has an easy and a gentle Labour, and yet brings forth a numerous and glorious Offspring; a Proof of which you have in the 66th Chapter of the Prophecies of the Prophet *Isaiah*, and the 8th Verse, *Who hath heard such a Thing? Who hath seen such Things? Shall the Earth be made to bring forth in one Day? Or shall a Nation be born at once? For, as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her Children.* Yea, not only as soon as Zion travails does she bring forth her Children, in such a Case as this, but even before Travail a numerous and glorious Offspring is produced from Zion's pregnant Womb, as in the 7th Verse of that same 66th of *Isaiah*, *Before she travailed she brought forth, before her Pain came she was delivered of a Man-Child.* This was immediately verified after the Resurrection of our Lord Christ, on the Day of *Pentecoste*; and I may say it has been verified in a particular Manner even in Scotland, our native Land, in her reforming Times, when the

Lord

Lord led our Forefathers by the Hand out of the *Egypt* of black Popery and Paganism, even to the Length of a solemn Avouching of him to be their God, and that with uplifted Hands to the most high God : Then, no fooner did *Zion* travail, but immediately she brought forth Children, a numerous and glorious Offspring to the Lord Christ.

But again, farther, in the *third* Place, upon this Head, we may remark, that, before *Zion* be delivered, she may have long Trouble and Pain, she may go forth out of the City, she may dwell in the Field ; yea, more, she may go even to *Babylon*, before she be delivered. You that are Believers in Christ, true Church-Members, the genuine Sons and Daughters of *Zion*, you must be brought from one Strait to another, from one Difficulty to another, one Extremity to another, before you be delivered. *Thou shalt go forth out of the City, thou shalt dwell in the Field ; yea, thou shalt go even to Babylon, there shalt thou be delivered.*

There are five Particulars with relation to the extreme Straits the Church and People of God may be brought into before Deliverance come, which I shall mention on this Remark. And, in the *first* Place, the Daughter of *Zion* may be brought to this Strait, of being stript of all her Beauty. You have a Word to this Purpose in the first Chapter of the Book of the *Lamentations* of Jeremiah, and there the 6th Verse, *From the Daughter of Zion all her Beauty is departed. All her Beauty is departed.* What think you is the Beauty of the Daughter of *Zion*, or the Church of Christ ? Why, it consists chiefly in these two Things, 1st. In Purity ; 2^{dly}. In the special Presence of God.

First, I say, the Beauty of the Daughter of *Zion* consisteth in the Purity of Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government. The Beauty of the
Daughter

Daughter of *Zion*, I say, consisteth in the Purity of the Doctrines of the Gospel delivered from the Word of Truth in the Church of Christ, when nothing is taught therein, but what is exactly agreeable to his Mind and Will, and when the Discipline of his House is managed and dispensed according to the Rule laid down in the Law and Testimony, and the Government of his House doth exactly quadrate with the Pattern shewn in the Mount of divine Revelation. But then,

adly. Not only does the Beauty of the Daughter of *Zion* consist in the Beauty of Purity, but also in the Beauty of Presence, in the special Presence of God in and with his Church and People. Remark it, Sirs, when the Beauty of Purity departs from *Zion*, from the Church, the Beauty of Presence does not readily continue in her. O what a Beauty is it to *Zion* the Presence of her God! When the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of *Zion*, is in the Midst of her, he is her Beauty and Glory, he himself is her Dignity and Excellency. To apply as we go along, we may see what a deplorable Case and Condition the Daughter of *Zion*, the New Testament Church, is in at this Day; when her spiritual Beauty is, in such a great Measure, departed from her. When God took her by the Hand, and led her out of *Babylon*, she was a noble Vine, wholly a right Seed; but, alas, the noble Vine is turned into the degenerate Plant of a strange Vine! The Beauty of Purity is in a great Measure defaced among all the Churches of Christ, and in the Church of *Scotland* amongst the rest. And as the Beauty is defaced; is not also the divine Presence departed in a great Measure, in so much that a Lamentation may be taken up over her, *How is thy Gold become dim! How is the most fine Gold changed!*

changed ! How is Error mingled with the pure Doctrines of his Word in this Day of Degeneracy from the Lord ! How is the Light of his Countenance withdrawn in a great Measure ! He hath shut up himself in a Cloud, that we cannot perceive him : It is not with us as in Months past, when the Lord made his Candle to shine upon our Head.

A 2^d Particular I shall mention on this Remark, is, That the Church of Christ, the Daughter of Zion, may be sent out of the City, to dwell in the Field, &c. before she be delivered, *that is*, The Church may be brought to a very great Strait, laid under the Feet of her Adversaries, under the Feet of her Enemies. Hence the Church cries out, because of Affliction, her Persecutors overtook her. Sometimes this is the Case, her Enemies they overtake her, she is carried Captive by them, carried even to *Babylon* by them, and troden under Foot by them for some Time.

But then, a 3^d Particular I mention, on this Remark, is, That the Church of Christ, before she be delivered, may be brought to this Strait, even to be deprived of her sacred Solemnities. This we see was the Case of the Church here, as is plainly pointed out in the Words read, *Thou shalt go forth out of the City : that is*, Thou shalt be deprived of thy sacred Solemnities, thou shalt be deprived of thy solemn Feast-Days. Hence is that Word, *The Ways to Zion languish, the Gates of Zion languish, none come to her solemn Feasts.*

A 4th Particular I mention on this Remark, is, That the Church of Christ, the Daughter of Zion, before she be delivered, may be brought to this Strait, that there may be no *publick Testimony* lifted up for the Truth of God, for his declarative

Glory amongst them; as for Instance, this was the Case of the Church in the 74th Psalm, and there the 9th Verse, *We see not our Signs, there is no more any Prophet, neither is there any among us who knoweth how long.* You have also a Word in the 11th Chapter of the Revelation, and 8th Verse, which concerneth old Babylon, but is typical of the New Testament Church, *Their dead Bodies shall lie in the Street of the great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.* Whether this Prophecy is fulfilled or not, as yet, I shall not determine: But it speaks a Falling of the Testimony of Christ in the Church, and among the People of God, when the Beauty of the Daughter of Zion departs from her, and her Enemies have her under their Feet. O what an extreme Strait is she in when she comes to be stript of her Beauty, held under the Feet of her Adversaries, deprived of her Solemnities, and when all publick Testimony for the Glory of Immanuel falls to the Ground! These indeed are great Extremities; yet,

Lastly, Upon this Remark, we tell you, sometimes the Church and People of God, the Daughter of Zion, before Deliverance, may be brought to this Extremity, that there is no visible Outgate for her, no Help, no Deliverance, to any human Appearance. Thus you see it was with the Church and People of God in Ezekiel's Days. In the 37th Chapter of Ezekiel, and 11th Verse, the Church is spoken of after this Manner, *Then he said unto me, Son of Man, these Bones are the whole House of Israel: Behold, they say, Our Bones are dried, and our Hope is lost, we are cut off for our Parts.* Thus far may the Daughter of Zion be brought before Deliverance: But it is worthy of our Notice and Observation.

Observation, that, when she is brought to this Pinch and Strait, just when she is saying her Bones are dried and her Hope lost, even then, in that Interim, behold Deliverance comes; as we may see in the Verses immediately following the Church's grievous Complaint, Verses 12th and 13th, *Therefore prophecy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, behold, O my People, I will open your Graves, and cause you to come up out of your Graves, and bring you into the Land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your Graves, O my People, and brought you up out of your Graves!* Agreeable to this Purpose also, is what we have in the 11th of the *Revelation*, from the 8th to the 12th Verse of that Chapter. There we see the Witnesses are slain, their dead Bodies are laid on the Streets, all seems to be lost and gone; but even this Extremity just preceeds a glorious Delivery and Revival to his Church. *And their dead Bodies shall lie in the Streets of the great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified; and they of the People, and Kindred, and Tongues, and Nations, shall see their dead Bodies, three Days and an Half, and shall not suffer their dead Bodies to be put in Graves; (so great shall be their Tyranny and Cruelty) and they that dwell upon the Earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send Gifts one to another, because these two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the Earth.* Note what follows, *And after three Days and an Half, the Spirit of Life from God entred into them, and they stood upon their Feet, and great Fear fell upon them which saw them.* Here we see plainly, when all Hope seemed to be lost and gone, and the Babylonians seemed to have got all their Will of the Church of God, yet his Thoughts are not their

their Thoughts, for the Spirit of Life from God enters into them, and then they are set to their Feet again. This much for the extreme Straits that the Church and People of God may be brought unto before Deliverance come, and so I pass the Remarks, and go on to the

Second general Head which I proposed, *namely*, To give the Reasons why the Church and People of God are brought into such extreme Straits before Deliverance come.

There are only these few Reasons following which I shall assign for it at present. In the *first* Place, the Church and People of God are brought into extreme Straits before Deliverance, that the glorious Majesty of God may be proclaimed, that his infinite Holiness may be published and declared, that his Hatred and Detestation of Sin may be evidenced; for he is a God of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, and cannot look upon Sin. All the Churches must know, that the Lord searcheth the Heart and trieth the Reins; if there be any Sin latent there, behold he will find it out; and so, when his Church and People backslide from him, go a-whoring from him, then he will manifest his infinite Holiness and Hatred of Sin, in punishing them for their Iniquity, and, in so doing, he will bring them into extreme Straits, put them out of the City, make them dwell in the Field, yea, bring them even to *Babylon*: For the *Transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the Iniquity of the House of Israel*. But again, in the

2d Place, The Church and People of God are brought into extreme Straits before Deliverance. Why? For this End, that he may try the Faith and Patience of his People, that he may be glorified in and by the Faith and Patience of his People. Observe

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the Expression you have in the 13th Chapter of the *Revelation*, and 10th Verse, *Here is the Faith and Patience of the Saints*; that is, Here the Faith and Patience of the Saints is tried; here the Faith and Patience of the Saints is kythed; here God is glorified in the Faith and Patience of the Saints; here the Truth and Reality of the true Religion of Jesus is vindicated and asserted by the Faith and Patience of the Saints. Again,

gilly. The Church and People of God are brought into extreme Straits before Deliverance, for this End also, that God's Hand may be seen in giving the Deliverance to his Church and People. *Thou shalt even go to Babylon, and there shalt thou be delivered; there the Lord shall redeem thee from the Hand of thine Enemies.* I say, the Church and People of God are brought into extreme Straits before Deliverance, just that God himself may be eminently and conspicuously seen in giving the Deliverance; that the Love and Pity of God may be seen, in taking Care of his Church and People till the Deliverance be wrought; that the Power and Omnipotence of God may be eminently seen and displayed in giving the Deliverance; it is just, that *Jehovah* do appear like himself, in breaking the mighty Gates of Brass, and cutting the Bars of Iron asunder. It is he that speaks of *Cyrus* as a Type of Christ, in the 45th Chapter of *Isaiah's* Prophecies, and 2d Verse. When he is about to deliver *Zion*, he says, *I will go before thee, and make their crooked Places streight; I will break in Pieces the Gates of Brass, and cut in sunder the Bars of Iron; and I will give thee the Treasures of Darknesse, and hidden Riches of secret Places, that thou mayest know that I the Lord, which call thee by thy Name, am the God of Israel.* Thus, I say, he al-

lows

lows the Church and People of God to be brought into extreme Straits before Deliverance, that his Hand may be seen in giving the same, that his glorious Sovereignty may be known; that he may manifest to the World that he is *Israel's* own God, in raising them up when brought low; for, *when the Lord builds up Zion, he shall appear in his Glory.*

The 4th and last Reason I shall assign, why the Church and People of God are brought into extreme Straits before Deliverance, is, that he may purify and refine the Daughter of Zion. She must go even to *Babylon*. Why? It is just that she may be purified and refined in *Babylon*; that she may be purified in *Babylon*; that her Dross may be removed in *Babylon*. To this Purpose you have a remarkable Word in the 13th Chapter of the Prophecies of the Prophet *Zechariah*, and there the last Verse, *And I will bring the third Part through the Fire, and will refine them as Silver is refined, and will try them as Gold is tried. They shall call on my Name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is my People; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.* For this End and Purpose, I say, he sees meet to bring his People even to *Babylon*; that he may purify and refine them. Why, hereby his Church is reformed, and the Dross separated from the true Metal. The Lord makes such a Time, and such a Mean, a manifesting Time and Mean. My Friends, there are many of you, who are flocking to Communion now, who, if the Lord bring his Church into *Babylon*, I am afraid there will be sad Discoveries of you; Christ, it may be, will have a thin Backing then, in respect of what is now, tho' Christ will never want a Backing. For these and many such Reasons it is, that the Church and People of God, the Daughter of Zion,

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are ordinarily brought into extreme Straits before Deliverance come. But

I proceed to the 3^d general Head in the Method, which was, to observe some of the remarkable Deliverances which the Lord gives to the Daughter of Zion, when she is brought to *Babylon*, or to these extreme Straits and Difficulties.

I only offer these few Thoughts concerning this Deliverance. In the *first* Place, this Deliverance which he gives to the Daughter of Zion, his Church and People, as to its Nature, it is a spiritual Deliverance, such a Deliverance as all who have received the Spirit of Adoption, do look out for, and earnestly desire; and as it is a spiritual Deliverance as to the Nature of it, so it is a spiritual Deliverance in respect of the Means by which it is brought about. What then are the primary Means by which it is brought about, by which the Lord gives it? Why, it is by the Power and Spirit of Christ: *Not by Might nor by Power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.* When the Lord comes to deliver his Church and People from mystical *Babylon*, How shall the Deliverance be brought about? Why, you have the Answer, *2 Thess. ii. 8. The Lord shall consume him with the Spirit of his Mouth, and shall destroy him with the Brightness of his Coming. With the Spirit of his Mouth; that is, just the Word of the Gospel accompanied with his holy Spirit, giving a glorious Manifestation of the Son of God in a Gospel-Dispensation; With the Brightness of his Coming; that is, there shall be such a bright Manifestation of the wonderful Person of Christ in the Gospel-Dispensation, that the blinded Nations shall give over wondring after the Beast, and shall look upon this great Sight with Wonder and Praise. There is a Vail drawn over the*

the Glory of the Person of Christ by *Babylon* at this Day, and so *Babylon* shall be destroyed, and the Church and People of God delivered, just by a bright supernatural Display of the Glory of the Person of Christ in the Dispensation of the Gospel carried home to Sinners by the holy Spirit. And thus, I say, it is a spiritual Deliverance, as to the Nature of it, and the Means by which it is brought about.

A 2^d Thought I offer concerning this Deliverance, which he gives his Church and People when brought to extreme Straits, is, That as it is, as to its Nature, a spiritual Deliverance, so the Way and Manner in which he brings about this Deliverance, is, by pouring out his Spirit upon his Church and People. If it be asked, How long is it till the Daughter of *Zion* be delivered? You have the Answer, which also points out the Manner of it, *Isa. xxxli. 15. Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the Wilderness be a fruitful Field, and the fruitful Field be counted for a Forest.* The Lord works Deliverance for his Church and People, when the Spirit comes down like Dew upon Mount *Zion*; when that Promise hath its Accomplishment, *Hosea xiv. 5. I will be as the Dew to Israel; he shall grow as the Lilly, and cast forth his Roots as Lebanon.* The Lord works Deliverance for his Church and People, when that Word of Grace, *Isa. xliv. 3 & 4. 5. is accomplished, I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty, I will pour Floods upon the dry Ground, I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thine Offspring.* What shall be the Effect? Why, it shall be Deliverance to the Daughter of *Zion*: For they shall spring up as among the Grass, as Willows by the Water-Courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the Name of Jacob, and
another

another shall subscribe with his Hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the Name of Israel. O then, Sirs, when the Spirit is thus poured out from on high, they shall go to Zion, as it is said of the returning Captives, *Jer. l. 4, 5. In those Days, and in that Time, saith the Lord, the Children of Israel shall come, they and the Children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go and seek the Lord their God; they shall ask the Way to Zion, with their Faces thitherward, &c.* The Time of the Church's Deliverance it is a weeping Time; a Time of weeping for the great Dishonours done to the Head of the Church, by the Sins of the Members of the Church; then they look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him; there is a Golling, and a Weeping as they go: But as it is a weeping Time, so it is a rejoicing Time. These are not inconsistent; we see it was a rejoicing Time to the returning Captives, as well as a weeping Time to them, *Psal. cxxvi. 1, 2, 3. When the Lord turned again the Captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream: Then was our Mouth filled with Laughter, and our Tongue with Singing: Then said they among the Heathen, The Lord hath done great Things for them; the Lord hath done great Things for us, whereof we are glad.* But then, as it is a weeping Time, and a rejoicing Time, so a Time of Deliverance to the Daughter of Zion; it is a covenanting Time. When the Daughter of Zion is delivered from *Babylon* it is a covenanting Time, as in that forecited 50th of *Jeremiah*, and 5th Verse; *Come, (say Israel and Judah) and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant, that shall never be forgotten.* It is a Time of taking hold of God's Covenant of Grace, of taking hold of the Head of the Covenant of Grace, of taking hold of him who is the All and in all of the Covenant of Grace, who is given to be the Covenant of the People, who is gi-

ven to be God's Salvation to the Ends of the Earth and, in consequence of this taking hold of God's Covenant of Grace, of him who is the Head and Surety of the Covenant of Grace, there is a Joining themselves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty, to keep his Judgments and Statutes, and to hearken to his Voice. It is a Time when they vow and swear Subjection to the King of Zion. I might tell you upon this Head, were I to insist, how that, when the Lord, by Means of the Preaching of the Gospel, did deliver the Church of Scotland from Antichristian Babylon, when, by the Blowing of the Silver Trumpet of the glorious Gospel, he made the Walls of Babylon to fall in Scotland, just like the Walls of Jericho by the Sounding of Rams Horns, then he so remarkably appeared against Antichrist, that he led our Fathers the Length of a solemn Avouching of the Lord to be their God; so that that Time of Deliverance was a Time of solemn Covenanting. I might also shew that it has been the Practice of the Churches of Germany, France, and others, in such a Time, to devote themselves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duties. Such a Time has been a Time of the Nations saying, *Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten*; wherein the Nations have said, *Come, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his Ways, and we will walk in his Paths*. But, not to insist,

In the 3d Place, another Thought I offer, with reference to the Deliverance of his Church and People, when brought into extreme Straits, is, That he delivers her in a most surprising Way and Manner: *Thou shalt even go to Babylon*. Strange! What to do at Babylon! Why, *There shalt thou be delivered*. Who would expect Deliverance in Babylon? Well, but there thou shalt be delivered. This was surprising

working to the Church of old, as is intimated in that
 foretold 126th Psalm, and 1st Verse, *When the Lord*
turned again the Captivity of Zion, we were like Men
that dream. We could not believe it; we were like to
 take it for a Dream, it came so surprisingly to Hand
 in such a surprising Place, even in *Babylon*. As the
 Lord delivers his Church and People in a surprising
 Way and Manner, even in *Babylon*, so we may no-
 tice here, that the Instruments the Lord gives the
 Deliverance by are also surprising. The Lord rais-
 ed up *Cyrus* King of *Persia*, as an Instrument for the
 Deliverance of his Church from *Babylon*. Who
 would have expected Deliverance from such an
 Airth? He casts down the *Assyrian* Empire, and
 sets up the *Persian*. Why is all this? Just for *Ja-*
cob his Servant's Sake, and *Israel* his Elect; just that
Cyrus might be the Instrument of Deliverance to his
 People; both in an unlikely Season and by an un-
 likely Instrument, that the Work might be seen to
 be of God. I may tell you here, Sirs, that when
 God delivered his Church and People in these Lands
 out of Antichristian *Babylon*, he did it both in an un-
 likely Season, and by an unlikely Instrument. As
 to the Time and Season of it, it was just when
 Darkness and Tyranny were arrived at their greatest
 Height and Degree. As to the Instrument, why,
 it was just by opening the Eyes of a poor blind Fri-
 er, (*Luther*) in spiriting him to preach against *Baby-*
lon; and so, by one Instrument after another, he
 carried on his Work in Spite of all Opposition from
 Hell or Earth. Some of you know what a great
 and extreme Strait this Church was brought into,
 when God appeared in the Year 1638. and how
 unexpected the Deliverance was, both as to the
 Season and Instruments, is very well known: By
 the Instrumentality of some poor Instruments he tum-
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bled down Antichristian Prelacy, turned us to himself, made us join ourselves to the Lord by solemn national Engagements, and made Persons of all Ranks say, *I am the Lord's*. Again, How surprising was the Deliverance God wrought for his Church and People in these Lands, when they were brought to the greatest Extremity in the Year 1688. fifty Years ago? If we consider the History of that Time we will find the Deliverance was most surprising, both as to the Season when, and Instrument by whom it was brought about. Why, it was in a Time when these Lands were threatned with a Deluge of Popery, when a Popish Sword was drawn, and ready to be sheathed in the Bowels of the Inhabitants of these Lands: And as to the Instrument of that Deliverance, Who would thought that God should have sent to another Land for an Instrument, by whom he would bring back our Captivity, as he then did, when he brought our late Sovereign King *William* from *Holland*, to banish a Popish Tyrant from the Throne of *Britain*? Was it not surprising? Thus, we say, God delivers his Church and People, when brought into extreme Straits, in a most surprising Way and Manner.

I shall only add, on this Head, in the 4th and last Place, that the Deliverance he gives to his Church and People, when brought into extreme Straits, it is in a Manner becoming the great Deliverer, becoming himself; it is in such a Manner as he himself will be seen in it. I shall not here enlarge, having hinted at this formerly, only, in a Word, when he delivers the Daughter of *Zion* from the Daughter of *Babylon*, it is in such a Way and Manner, as that it may be said, *That their Sword did not get them the Land, neither did their Arm save them, but his Right-Hand, and his holy Arm, and the Light of*

his Countenance alone, that works the Salvation. It is in a Manner becoming himself.

I shall not insist farther on the doctrinal Part. I come to conclude the whole in an Use of Information, Consolation and Exhortation.

I shall be short, may the Lord assist us in the Use of this Doctrine: It was with Difficulty I entred upon this Subject, but another I could not think upon. Let us then have our Eyes to him in the Use and Improvement of this Doctrine.

Is it so, then, that the Church and People of God are brought into the greatest Extremity, that their Deliverance may be the more conspicuous and glorious? Then, 1st. for Information. In a short Word, be informed of the present Situation of the Church and People of God. I shall read you a Question upon this Use of the Doctrine, together with its Answer. You have it in the 21st of *Isaiah*, and 11th and 12th Verses of that Chapter, *The Burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, What of the Night? Watchmen, What of the Night?* If you enquire at me, *Watchman, What of the Night*, I answer unto you just in the Words of the Spirit of God, *The Morning cometh, and also the Night.* The Morning of a Deliverance to his Church shall come, but yet, in the mean Time, know that the Night goes before the Morning. We have at this Day, in a great Measure, a Night of it, but the Night will be darker yet, before the Morning come: the Night goes before the Morning: Therefore the Prophet, in this Word, gives them to know, that tho' it was Night when the Call was given, *What of the Night?* Yet it should be darker, for some of it was to come: *The Morning cometh, and also the Night.* And, my Friends, tho' the Night is dark upon the Churches of Christ at present, tho' it be now a Night of
Withering

Withering, a Night of Error, a Night of Back-
 sliding, a Night of Falling away from the Lord,
 yet, Sirs, tho' the Night is dark, I am afraid the
 darkest of the Night is not yet come. Why,
 say you, Can the Night be darker? Can the Case
 of the Church be worse than it is just now, under
 the weary Scatterings there are among the People
 of God, under the Heart-overwhelming Breakings
 there are among the People of God, under the sad
 Witherings and Decays that take Place among
 the People of God? Yea, Sirs, the Night may be
 darker yet; the Daughter of *Zion* may not only
 go out of the City, but dwell in the Field, and go
 even to *Babylon*, before she be delivered. I think
 our Text is very expressive of our present Situation
 in this Land, *Thou shalt go forth out of the City, and
 thou shalt dwell in the Field, and thou shalt go even to
 Babylon, &c.* I say, our Text is much expressive
 of our Case; as for Instance, Are we not made
 to go out of the City? Are we not cast out of
 the Bosom of the present established Church by
 their iniquous Acts and Procedures? But then,
 tho' we are made to go forth out of the City, we
 are not yet wholly made to dwell in the Field,
 not yet deprived of our sacred Solemnities, for we
 have had Occasion to see, in this Place, the solemn
 sacred Symbols of our Lord's broken Body and
 shed Blood set before us; but as this Ordi-
 nance has been dispensed in a witnessing Congre-
 gation, in a Congregation who are by Profession
 gone forth out of the City, on their Way to
 dwell in the Field, why, in so far the Text is
 expressive of our present Situation; and, before
 the Deliverance come, we may be deprived of Oc-
 casions of this Nature, made to dwell in the Field,
 yea, brought even to *Babylon*. We are not yet
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under the Feet of an Antichristian Party in *Babylon*, but, ere all be done, we may even go to *Babylon*. We are as yet privileged with the Standard of a publick Testimony for the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government of the Church of *Scotland*: However weak and worthless some of us are to put our Hand to it, yet it is a standing Testimony for the Cause and Interest of Christ, whatever Way a corrupt Generation may look upon it: But, Sirs, before all be done, the Standard of a publick Testimony may altogether fall to the Ground in this Land. I shall not determine the Question anent that dismal Event we have in the 11th Chapter of the *Revelation*, concerning the Killing of the Witnesses, whether it be past, or to come. Great Men have differed in their Opinions. Some have thought that Event was brought about at the Reformation by *Luther*; they think the Killing of the Witnesses respected that Time. Others think it will fall in with the last fatal Stroke that shall be given unto an Antichristian Party, which shall usher in the Glory of the latter Times; and that, immediately before that, there shall be a Deluge of Popery, a general Killing of the Witnesses, a general Falling of a Testimony for Christ; I say, I shall not determine this Question; I shall only remark two or three Things farther upon this Use; for our Information with reference unto all the Churches of Christ at this Day, and particularly with reference unto the Church of *Scotland*, which gives Ground to think that we shall be sent even to *Babylon* before a Deliverance shall be given unto us.

First, I remark, That when an universal and general Apostasy and Tyranny doth prevail in any reformed Church, it threatens we shall go even to *Babylon*

Babylon before we be delivered : And how far this has been and is the Case with these Churches called *Reformed*, any who are acquainted with the History of them may judge. Why, the *Arian* and *Pelagian* Heresies have so raged in the Churches abroad, that they just paved a Way for the Man of Sin, and tended to make Antichrist mount the Throne; and so much do these prevail in those Churches, which at least have the Name of Reformed and Protestant Churches, together with the prevailing of Antichristian Tyranny among them, that they bode fair for our going even unto *Babylon*, before a Deliverance come. If any ask the Reason why the reformed Churches are so dreadfully fallen under the Feet of Antichristian Tyranny, the Spirit of God gives the Answer of this Question, 2 *Thess.* ii. 10, 11, 12. *Because they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved: For this Cause God shall send them strong Delusion, that they should believe a Lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness.* This ushered in the Revelation of Antichrist, and this paved a Way for that dismal Apostasy from the Christian Faith and Profession, which takes Place at this Day in the Churches of Christ, and in *Scotland* in particular.

In the 2^d Place, I remark, That when an universal Degeneracy prevails among all the reformed Churches, in Practice as well as in Principle, it threatens that the Daughter of *Zion*, shall go even to *Babylon* before she be delivered. How far this is the Case with us, let any thinking Person judge; the Truth is not received in the Love of it; the Glory of Christ is darkned and vailed; Men despise the Grace of God. I think there is nothing

more

more threatens us than an Inundation of Popery at this Day ; why, already the Land is overspread with a fearful Overflow of Delfin and Athellin, and of many corrupt Doctrines subversive of the pure Truths of the Gospel of Christ : And does not this bode an Inundation of Popish Darkness, that we shall be sent even to *Babylon* before we be delivered ? And withal it bodes very ill, that there is such a Fainting with respect unto a *publick Testimony* for Christ, and the Truths of Christ. Is it not lamentable and strange, we desire to speak it with Grief, that the present Church are so far from lifting up a particular Testimony for the particular Truths that are impugned and denied in the Day and Time wherein we live, that they are with Might and Main endeavouring to run down and oppose the Testimony that we have, under the good Conduct of our God, been directed to lift up for the Truth of Christ, and against a Deluge of Error and Defection from the Truth and Cause of God ? Yea, they are come the Length of slaying and running down such as are minding to own this Mite of a Testimony for Christ. But what is the Matter of running down us ? What tho' we be run down, providing the Truths of Christ, the Rights and Prerogatives of Christ, were maintained ? Let our Name and Reputation and all go, but let Christ's Name and Fame be exalted and set on high. Sirs, I know not if ever I had Occasion to speak in Christ's Name to so many of his scattered Flock at once ; allow me, for I must tell you, that the Daughter of *Zion*, the Church and People of God, ought not to neglect any publick free Testimony for the Truths of Christ, and against the Indignities done to him and his Cause. I think it is Matter of Lamentation, and it calls aloud

for Mourning at this Day, that, when the Banner of a Testimony is lifted up, so few gather to it, and so many are endeavouring to bear it down : It is Matter of Lamentation, and calls aloud for Mourning, Sirs, that the Sins of former Times must be extenuated, covered and palliated : It has a threatening Aspect, that we will not lament our own nor our Fathers Iniquities, and return to the Lord. This would say that we shall go even to *Babylon* before we be delivered. I have observed likeways with Regret how many Professors, through the different Corners of *Scotland*, in the Year 1732. came with their Testimonies before the Church Judicatures of this Land, remonstrating and reclaiming against the violent Intrusions made upon the Heritage of God : They would have been then content to have seen a *publick Testimony* lifted up for Christ, and his Truth and Cause, but, alas, what is become of some of them now ! I fear, instead of that former Zeal whereby they were acted, a *Latitudinarian* Principle prevails with them, they have got over their former Strictness, and can fall in with a boundless Toleration for all Sorts of Religion, which will be introductive of of all Sorts of Looseness and Profanity : The Hedge of Government is taken down at this Day, and the Daughter of *Zion* lies open to the wild Boars of the Forest to devour her, and the wild Beast of the Field to waste her. I warn you, in the Name of the Lord, whoever you be that give Countenance and Assistance to the taking down this Hedge, tho' you were the Signet on his right Hand, you shall smart for it ; you shall smart for your opposing a Testimony for the Government of Christ's House in this covenanted Land : You are blinded as to the Cause of Christ at this Day ;
and

and therefore it is, that you are like the Heath in the Desert, that does not see when Good comes, and you do not observe the Operation of his Hand. And is not this a threatening Sign we shall go even to *Babylon* before we be delivered? I shall not insist farther upon this Use;

But I come, 2dly. To drop a few Words by Way of Consolation.

If it be so, as you have heard, that the greatest Extremity of the Church makes Way for a glorious Deliverance unto her, then hence see for our Comfort a Bow in the Church's darkest Cloud. Tho' the Daughter of *Zion* should go forth out of the City, tho' she should dwell in the Field, tho' she should go even to *Babylon*, yet there shall she be delivered, there the Lord shall redeem her from the Hands of her Enemies: Tho' she should be in Pain, and labour to bring forth, like a Woman in Travail, yet all her Pangs and sore Throws, they are all big with a glorious Deliverance, a glorious Deliverance will be the happy Issue of them all: *Therefore fear not, Worm Jacob, and fear not, Israel my Servant.* Let not the Lord's People be too much cast down, let them not mourn as those that have no Hope, saying, *Our Bones are dried, our Hope is lost, and we are cut off for our Parts.* Let Faith see Comfort to *Zion*, so long as *Zion's* King remains. Tho' she should be brought even to *Babylon*, yet there she shall be delivered; her greatest Extremity will make Way for a most glorious Delivery unto her. Thus we say there is a Bow in the Church's darkest Cloud. Hence we find the Prophet saying, in the 4th of *Micah*, from the 11th Verse to the Close of the Chapter, *Now also many Nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our Eye look upon Zion; but they know not the Thoughts of the Lord.* These Enemies of *Zion*, they know not

not the Thoughts of the Lord, what Good the Lord intendeth to bring out of their Ill-will to *Zion*; they know not the Thoughts of the Lord, what the Lord is about to do with *Zion*. When *Zion* is brought even to *Babylon*, then *Zion* is looked upon by her Enemies as in a very desperate Case and Condition, then the Daughter of *Babylon* apprehends she hath got her Will of *Zion*. Why, they know not the Thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his Counsel : Their Design is the Destruction of *Zion*, but the Design of the Lord, in all this, is a most glorious Deliverance to *Zion*; and so it is added in this Place, *Therefore he shall gather them as the Sheaves into the Floor*, namely, the Enemies of *Zion*. What then, *Arise and thresh, O Daughter of Zion, for I will make thine Horn Iron, and I will make thy Hoofs Brass, and thou shalt beat in Pieces many People, and I will consecrate their Gain unto the Lord, and their Substance unto the Lord of the whole Earth.* Up your Hearts then, O Friends of *Zion* ! Sirs, I must tell you, they have a terrible Party to deal with who meddle with the Daughter of *Zion* to her Hurt ; for tho' her Husband frown upon her, yet he will return to her with loving Kindness ; tho' *Zion's* God should give her the Brim of the Cup to drink, yet her Enemies shall be made to drink the bitter Dregs of that Cup before all be done ; yea I say, the Enemies of *Zion* shall drink the very bitter Dregs of the Cup ere all be done. Why then, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my People, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Zion. Rejoice in the Lord, ye Righteous; and again, I say, Rejoice.* Surely you have good Reason so to do. It is a noble Ground of Encouragement, that *Zion's* Extremity makes Way for her Delivery ; the more her Trouble is increased, the more remarkable will her Deliverance be ; the sharper the Shower is, it will be the shorter. *Zion*
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in this Land, when brought to *Babylon*, will have a sharp Hour, but a short Hour. *Thou shalt go even unto Babylon, and there shalt thou be delivered.* Faint not, then, ye Friends of our glorious *Immanuel*, tho' you should go even to *Babylon*. Tho' *Zion*, the Daughter of *Zion*, should go even to *Babylon*, there she shall be delivered. Mourn not as those who have no Hope, for *Zion's* God reigneth : *Thy God, O Zion, reigneth to all Generations ;* and thy God, O *Zion*, will give thee Deliverance when in *Babylon*. *Thou shalt go even to Babylon, and there shalt thou be delivered.*

I come, 3dly. to conclude this Subject in a Word of Exhortation.

Is it so, as you have been hearing, that the Daughter of *Zion* shall even go to *Babylon*, that the State of the Church is like to be darker yet ? Why, then, my first Exhortation to you is, when the Daughter of *Zion* is under a Cloud, and the Night like to be darker and darker, then let me exhort you all to make sure an Interest in Christ, and in that spiritual Redemption from the Tyranny of Sin, Satan and the World, that is purchased by the Lord Christ. This is the best Preparative for meeting with the dark and cloudy Day, an Interest in Christ, and the Redemption purchased by him from the Bondage and Tyranny of Sin and Satan ; every one of us by Nature are under the Bondage and Tyranny of the God of this World, the Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit that now worketh in the Children of Disobedience. Ye are every one of you still under the Power of Sin, who are Strangers to Christ, and so consequently under the Curse of the Law, under the Sentence of a broken Covenant of Works. And I must tell you, Sirs, that, in this everlasting Gospel,

spel, Redemption is published, a purchased Redemption is published unto you. I publish and proclaim this Redemption, this spiritual Liberty and Freedom through the Blood of Christ, to every captive Sinner in all this vast Assembly. I publish and proclaim this Redemption and Freedom to every bound Captive hearing me this Day. I tell you, in his Name, it is a Redemption for you; if you be a Captive in Bonds, hear the Proclamation the Spirit of God makes of it in the 61st of *Isaiah* and 1st Verse, *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good Tidings to the Meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the Opening of the Prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord, &c.* O, if the Lord Christ would be pleased to proclaim this Redemption among you this Day, not in Word only, but with Power, and in the holy Ghost, Liberty to the Captives! O captive Sinner, who ever thou art, in thy natural State thou art in Captivity and in Bonds, a Bond-Slave to Sin, a Bond-Slave to Satan! Why, we tell you good Tidings of great Joy, to you is proclaimed Liberty and Freedom, Redemption is proclaimed unto thee. Thus saith the Lord, To you, O Prisoner, to you, O dark and dead Sinner, go forth and shew yourselves; shew yourselves to be Sinners needing a Saviour; shew yourselves to the Saviour, to the Redeemer, to him who is the mighty God, mighty to save you, the Lord of Hosts able to save you, the merciful God willing to save you: *Thus saith the Lord, I that speak in Righteousness am mighty to save, Isa. lxiii. 1.* Mighty to save from the Tyranny and Power of Satan; mighty to save from the Tyranny and Power of Unbelief; mighty to

Save from the prevailing Evils in thy Heart, let
 them be never so great, never so strong; he is a
 mighty and strong Redeemer, a Redeemer not on-
 ly by Price, but also by Power; he paid a Price
 of infinite Worth and Value for you, and will
 not you come and take Salvation from him? He
 is a powerful Redeemer, he hath an Arm that is
 full of Power, an omnipotent Arm, that can with
 one Stroke (so to speak) break asunder the strong-
 est Gates of Brass, and cut in Pieces the strongest
 Bars of Iron. He is not only willing, but able to
 give to the uttermost, all that come to God by him;
seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them.
 Behold, Sirs, on this last Day of the Feast, our
 Lord Jesus stands and cries, O Prisoners, go forth
 and shew yourselves! O Captives, go forth out
 of *Babylon*! Hasten, hasten, hasten; flee out of *Ba-
 bylon*, escape for thy Life; flee out of the *Babylon*
 of a natural State, it is the City of Destruction;
 hasten, flee for your Lives, flee to a Saviour,
 flee to a Redeemer; he is standing (so to speak) with
 Arms wide open to receive you; the Arms of his
 Love are wide open to receive you, the Arms of
 his Mercy and Grace are wide open to receive you;
 hasten, flee into the City of Refuge for thy Life:
 The Arms of the Saviour are stretched out to em-
 brace you, with God's Welcome, with the Wel-
 come of God, Father, Son and holy Ghost. O
 thou, Child of the Devil, come and be the Child
 of God! O Swearer, come and speak the Lan-
 guage of *Canaan*, the heavenly Dialect, the pure
 Language of the City above! O Servant of Satan,
 come and be the Servant of the living God! Thou
 art yet out of Hell, and whilst thou art out of Hell,
 thou hast Access to a Saviour, Access to a Re-
 deemer. O filthy Sinner, come and be washed
 from

from all thine Idols; tho' thou hast lien among the Pots, and be as black as Hell with the Stain of Sin, yet come, thou shalt appear *as the Wings of a Dove, whose Wings are covered with Silver, and her Feathers with yellow Gold.* - What should hinder thy Coming to him, who is a Redeemer by Price and Power, one that hath infinite Power to bring thee, to draw thee, to lead thee, to guide thee? O who can speak forth the Glory of this Redeemer, the infinite Excellency of this Redeemer! O that some of this Company, that never yet knew this Redeemer, that are in the *Babylon* of a natural State, would this Day take hold of his Grace proclaimed in this Gospel, and would by Faith apprehend proclaimed Liberty, Liberty to Captives, and the Opening of the Prisons to them that are bound.

This Exhortation being to all in general; but to Strangers, to such as have no saving Interest in Christ in particular, I must therefore add a Word, by Way of Motive and Excitement, to fall in with the Word of Exhortation. Consider then, O Sinner, to stir you up to make sure an Interest in Christ, that the Lord is preaching now in a Word of Grace and Promise to you; but the Lord knows how soon he may send the Daughter of *Zion*, his Church and People, to *Babylon*, and give us a Famine, not of Bread nor of Water, but of the Word of God; and O what shall become of you, in the Day of Visitation, who have no Interest in Christ! O Sirs, we know not how soon the Lord may be provoked to say, *I will whet my glittering Sword, my Hand shall take hold of Vengeance, for the Lord hath a Sacrifice.* Where? Not in *Bazrah*, not in the Land of *Idumea*, but in the Church of *Scotland*, among all the Churches, for their woful Apostasy from God, and in
treacherous

treacherous Scotland among the rest, Gospel-despising Scotland, sinning Scotland, Covenant-breaking Scotland, Christ-despising Scotland. O Sirs, how justly may he whet his glittering Sword amongst you, against you, for your Iniquity? And if he cause his Church and People in this Land to go forth out of the City, and to dwell in the Field, and send them even to *Babylon*, O how sad will thy Case be, thou who art a Stranger to Christ, to have an angry God, a God out of Christ meeting thee! O therefore accept of offered Liberty, of an offered Saviour, and offered Salvation through him, as ye were hearing on *Saturday*! *Now is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation: To-day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts:* For to you, even to you, O Sinner, is the Word of this Salvation sent. Receive it, Sirs, with particular Application, and Christ in it; and so you will have the best Preparative for, and the best Preservative in a stormy Day, in the dark and cloudy Day.

In the 2d Place, let me address myself in a Word of Exhortation, to you, in an especial Manner, who profess the Name of Christ, who profess to be the Friends and Witnesses of Christ. And

My Exhortation to you is, O see to it, and take care that you be well rooted in Christ Jesus. Is it a Time of Darkness with the Church? Is it Night with the Church and People of God? And have we Ground to apprehend that the Night may grow darker yet before the Morning come? Is the Church and People of God, the Daughter of *Zion*, made to go forth out of the City? Are we threatned to be made to dwell in the Field, and to be sent even to *Babylon* before Deliverance come? Why, then, O Professor, be concerned to be well rooted in Christ, well rooted in the Truths and

Cause of Christ. We find the Apostle exhorts to this Duty in the 2d Chapter of his Epistle to the *Colossians*, and there the 6th and 7th Verses of that Chapter, *As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the Faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with Thanksgiving.* We exhort you, take home with you that Word of Exhortation, *Be rooted and built up in Christ.* It is a great Matter, Sirs, to be rooted in him; be rooted in Christ as the Branch in the Vine, as the Branch is in the Root. What is that Profession of yours, Man, Woman, without this, but an empty Profession, an empty Shell without a Kernel, an empty Shadow without a real Substance. What signifies all your publick and glaring Profession, if you be not rooted in Christ? What signifies your publick Religion, Professor, who are not rooted in Christ? Why, I tell you, it is but a gross Delusion if you are not rooted in Christ. I never like these Folks Religion, Sirs, that begins first with the Publick. Be concerned to be first rooted in Christ by Faith, and then a solid Concern for the declarative Glory of God, the Cause and Interest of Christ, will immediately follow in its due Order. That Concern for the Glory of God which flows not from Faith's Views of the Glory of *Immanuel's* Person, is not to be regarded. Those who are concerned in a right Way and Manner for the Publick, they are such Persons who have first come to the Lord Jesus, who have united with him by Faith, and so are rooted in him. Sirs, even tho' there be some amongst you who have come the Length of adhering to a publick Testimony for the born-down Cause of Christ at this Day, yet are you not rooted in Christ. Why, Sirs, What will this your Adherence signify if you

be not rooted in Christ Jesus, by his Spirit taking
 hold of you, and drawing you to him, and Faith's
 Outgoing of the Soul from all Things in a World to
 him alone ? My Friends, try the Matter, then ; Faith
 in Christ, and a faithful Witnessing for Christ, go to-
 gether : And if any please themselves with an Ad-
 herence to a Testimony for Christ and his Cause,
 without seeking to be rooted in him, and built up
 in him, their Naughtiness may be shortly discover-
 ed, for all the Length they have gone : You have
 but gone with the Footmen, how shall you contend
 with Horses ? And what will you do in the Swellings
 of *Jordan* ? Stay till you come there, which may
 be shortly, and then shall you be discovered who
 are not rooted in Christ. Let none think we speak
 this to discourage the exercised Believer, or to dis-
 courage the owning of a Testimony. This is a plain
 Duty, which the Lord is calling for at the Hands
 of all his Servants and People at this Day, whe-
 ther they will hear, or whether they will forbear.
 But, Sirs, we want you to own a Testimony for
 Christ, from Faith's Views of the Glory of
 Christ. Seek then to be rooted in Christ. O
 it is a great Matter to be rooted in Christ, to
 be built up and established in Christ. There is
 a Gathering together among you in praying Socie-
 ties at this Day ; it is well it is so ; it is good
 for the Lord's People to be thus employed in such
 a Time as this ; it is good to be meeting
 for Prayer and Christian Conference ; tho' it
 is a Practice that is run down by the polite
 Wits of the Age, yet it is a Duty warranted by
 the Lord, *Mal. iii: 16. They that feared the Lord*
spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkned and
heard it, &c. Thus the Duty is good, but, Sirs,
 we would have you to consider, that your being in
 a Soci-

a Society will not do the Business, unless you be rooted in Christ: *For in that Day many will say, Lord, Lord, we have eaten and drunk in thy Presence, and thou hast taught in our Streets; to whom he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are, depart from me all ye Workers of Iniquity.* No doubt these prayed and also conferred with others about the Matters of God; therefore Professors, Members of Christian Societies, study to be rooted in Christ; for Folks to meet together in Societies, and yet to be Strangers to Christ, is dangerous. Study above all to be rooted in Christ; do not sit down upon any prosoft Adherence unto a Testimony for Christ; do not sit down upon your praying and conversing one with another, seek to be rooted and built up in Christ, otherways, I testify unto you, ye have no Part in Christ, all will be useless to you if ye are not rooted in Christ: You will be taken by the great Husbandman and thrown into Hell-Fire, as Fuel to the Flame of vindictive Justice, unless you be rooted and built up in Christ.

I shall now conclude this Discourse with a few Directions by Way of Motive to excite you to fall in with the Word of Exhortation.

In the *first* Place, study a close, humble and needy Dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ. O be humble! A humble Christian is a rare Christian. Away with a proud Christian! Meekness is among the very first Lessons of Christianity. *If any Man will be my Disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me, saith our Lord.* O seek to be humble and self-denied! Sirs, it is just the Ornament of a Christian to be denied to himself. Again,

In the *2d* Place, If you would be rooted in Christ as ye should, study a close, humble and needy Dependence on him in whom all your Springs

are;

are; so let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly. Hear what he himself adviseth for your Encouragement, John v. 7. *If ye abide in me, and my Words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.* If ye ask, Where is the Word to be found which must abide in you? I answer, It is to be found in the Bible which you have put in your Hands. In what Part of it? say you. I answer, In every Part of it; just in all the Bible. What think ye of the Scriptures of the Old Testament? Why, they are just the Word of God, as well as those of the New. The whole Scriptures are given to be the Standard of Truth for the resolving of Controversies, to be the infallible Rule of Faith and Practice to his Church in all Ages and Periods of the same, until Time gives Place to Eternity, when the Church shall be arrived at her triumphant State; and then no more shall the Bible be needful. We advise you, then, to abide not only by the Word of the Prophets, but also by the Commandments of the Apostles, as you have it, 2 Pet. iii. 1, 2. *This second Epistle (Beloved) I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure Minds by Way of Remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the Words which were spoken before by the holy Prophets, and of the Commandment of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour.* What are the Words ye are to be mindful of? You have them in that 2d Verse the Words which were spoken by the holy Prophets under the Old Testament, and the Commandments of the Apostles of Christ under the New. These are the Words of Christ which we are called to lay up in our Hearts, that we may not sin against him.

3dly. If ye would be rooted in Christ, in a shaking Day and Time, I advise you, next to
your

your Bibles, to make Use of our Confession of Faith. We have Reason, Sirs, to bless God who so remarkably directed the Compilers of our excellent Confession of Faith. What are Confessions of Faith, Sirs? Why, they are the publick Confessions of the Churches concerning the divine Truths they receive and believe, in Opposition to the gross Errors vented in these Dregs of Time, in Opposition to the Indignities done to the Truth of God contained in his Word. Read our Confession of Faith, and there you will see the Truths of God drawn out of the Word of God in an orderly and distinct Manner, for our Instruction, Edification and Establishment in the Truth. Likewise I recommend it to you to read and consider the Form of Presbyterial Church-Government, Directory for Family-Worship, Sum of saving Knowledge, and Books of Discipline; all which you have along with the said Confession of Faith. It hath been observed of this Country, they can generally speak less for their Principles than Papists can do for theirs. Why, the Reason is, they are not concerned to know them, and so it comes to pass that they are so easily beaten out of them. Again,

In the 4th Place, If you would be rooted in Christ and his Truths, O then pray much for the Spirit of Christ, that he may guide you into all Truth, and that ye may be kept in the High-Way. Ye know in a dark Night Men commonly lose their Way. If it is so dark a Night, O then pray for the Leader to break up your Way! Keep your Eye upon your Leader, look to him, that he may lead in a plain Path, because of your Observers.

I am afraid I have insisted too long. I shall only add another Advice, and conclude with it.

If it is so, that the Church's greatest Extremity makes Way for a glorious Deliverance unto her, and that, tho' she should go even to *Babylon*, yet there shall she be delivered, then I will advise you to live in the Faith and Hopes of a glorious Delivery to the Church and People of God. Wait and pray for her Delivery; you have good Ground to hope for that happy Time, because he that has said, *Thou shalt go even to Babylon*, has also said, *There shalt thou be delivered*. What you have so good Ground to hope for, ye should be waiting for, and praying for in a Way of Faith. O cry for his Coming! Lift up a Prayer for the Remnant that is left! O cry that he may return in Mercy to *Jerusalem*, that he may hasten a Deliverance to his Church and People, whatever Way he sees meet! O plead that the Wheel of Providence may move swiftly towards the favouring of *Zion*! Cry, cry, Let the Time to favour *Zion* come, even the Time that thou hast set! O cry for a returning God, and a returning Glory! O cry for his Return to *Scotland* our native Land, for his Return to every one of us! We are all under sad Symptoms of his Anger at this Day, therefore, O lift up a Prayer for his Return! For your Encouragement, Sirs, who are concerned for his Return, we tell you, you may die in the hopeful Prospect and Faith of it, tho' you should not live to see it, and it may be, Sirs, you may live to see it: But whether ye live to see it or not, die in the Faith that that Passage of Scripture shall be made out (in this Land) which you have in the 66th of *Isaiab*, from the 10th to the 15th Verse, *Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her; rejoice for Joy with her, all ye that mourn for her; that ye may suck and be satisfied with*

with the Breasts of her Consolations, that ye may milk out and be delighted with the Abundance of her Glory: For thus saith the Lord, Behold I will extend Peace to her like a River, and the Glory of the Gentiles like a flowing Stream. Then shall ye suck, ye shall be born upon her Sides, and be dandled upon her Knees: As one whom his Mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this your Heart shall rejoyce, and your Bones shall flourish like an Herb, and the Hand of the Lord shall be known towards his Servants, and his Indignation towards his Enemies.

Now, to conclude, O may the Time to favour Zion, the set Time come! May he build up Zion, and appear in his Glory! May all his Followers be confirmed and kept in the Way of Truth, led in a plain Path in a dark Day, because of their Enemies, and kept, by the Power of God, through Faith unto Salvation.

7 AP 55
F I N I S.

The Lamb's Retinue attending him whithersoever he goeth.

Being the Substance of

TWO SERMONS,

Preached on *Sabbath* and *Monday*, at the Celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at *Orwell*, *August 6.* 1738.

U P O N

REV. xiv. 4. *These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*

By the late REVEREND and LEARNED Mr. WILLIAM WILSON Minister of the Gospel at Perth.

Carefully revised by a reverend Member of the Associate Synod.

E D I N B U R G H,

Printed for David Duncan, and Sold at his House, opposite to the *Weigh-House*, North Side of the Street. MDCCXLVII.



The Lamb's Retinue attending him whithersoever he goeth.

REV. xiv. 4.

*These are they which follow the Lamb
whithersoever he goeth.*

MY Friends, we are now assembled together, according to an Institution of divine Appointment, in a publick worshipping Assembly. Let every one of us endeavour to have the Faith of God's omniscient Eye upon us. God is looking upon us at all Times, and in a more especial Manner his Eye is upon us when we come before him in the Duties of his Worship, when we approach into the Presence of God in his Ordinances. I must tell you, Sirs, before we proceed, a great Work is going about in this Place to-day, the greatest Solemnity that can be gone about in this Side of Time; the Death of Christ, the worthy Lamb, is celebrating here to-day; the Ordinance that is dispensing in this Place, it is a Shewing forth the Death of Christ, until he come again. Here is an Event that concerns all this Audience whoever they be, whether designed Communicants or not, the Death of our Lord Christ. If you have no Interest in this Death, Sin will be your Death for ever; it will ruin and undo you throughout

throughout all Eternity ; it is through that Death that is celebrating in the Sacrament to-day, that ye must have Life, or you can never have it, but must perish eternally ; it is through that Death that you must have Redemption from the Curse of a broken Law, Redemption from Wrath to come : If you have not Redemption through that Death, the Law-Curse will certainly take hold upon you, vindictive Justice will be execute upon you, the Wrath of God will come down upon you, and crush you down to the lowest Hell ; it will sink you down to the bottomless Pit : That Death, it is a Door of Hope opened to perishing Sinners, opened for the Sins of Men, for rebellious Men, for self-destroying Men ; a Door of Hope is opened here for Hell-deserving Men, for unrighteous Men : *For God made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be the Righteousness of God in him.* O, then, is there a Door of Hope opened for guilty Men, rebellious Men, and will you not take the Benefit of this Door, and enter by this Door ? This is the Gate of God, Redemption through the Blood of Christ, through the Death of Christ. This is that Gate by which all that are justified do enter into the Presence of God ; by which entering they come to have a safe Standing before God. Sirs, this Death that is commemorating this Day, in this Place, it is a Door of Hope opened unto the greatest Transgressors amongst you in all this Assembly. Ye in this Assembly have been hearing the Word preached, in the other Assembly the Sacrament is dispensed. Well, Sirs, this is God's high Market-Day in this Place and Congregation ; it is not an ordinary Sabbath, it is an high Sabbath, it is a Communion-Sabbath. Ye are come to God's Market. What are you doing in God's Market ? What are you buying in God's Market ? It is a rare Market, a Market of Grace, a Market of

of rich and glorious Grace : It is a none-such Market ; the Wares that are at this Market are exceeding great and precious, the Excellency of them cannot be told : If Angels were called to come and tell you the Worth and Excellency of them, they could not do it to the full. If some of the general Assembly of the First-born were sent forth to this Assembly to speak of the Wares which are a-selling, or rather a-giving here to-day, they would be so far from fully setting forth the unsearchable Riches of Christ, that they would cry, Come and see ; come, taste and see ? O Sirs, this will be the best Proof of Christ the worthy Lamb, and of the rich and glorious Commodities in this Gospel-Market, just to come and see : *O taste and see that God is good.* Come, partake of that Grace that is in Christ Jesus ! Come, partake of that unsearchable Riches of Christ, that are exposed in this Market of Grace ! O Sirs, the Market of Grace is a rare Market ; the Wares that are therein proclaimed are all given freely. *He, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters ; and he that hath no Money let him come, and buy Wine and Milk without Money and without Price ! Whosoever will, let him take the Waters of Life freely.* O come and take-freely ! O come and enjoy ! O come and share of the unsearchable Riches of Christ Jesus, the worthy Lamb ! O do not stand all the Day idle in the Market-Place ! Ye are here just in the Market-Place, be not idle in the Market-Place. Do not complain you have not wherewith to buy, for the Wares, we tell you, are free, and the great Merchant is saying in this Gospel, *Buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that ye may be rich, and white Raiment that thou mayest be clothed, that the Shame of thy Nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine Eyes with Eye-Salve, that thou mayest see.* O what think you of it, Sirs, that

that God hath thus visited us, in rearing up his Tabernacle among Men ! Will God in very deed dwell with Men ? If we had Eyes to see, and Hearts to understand, we could not but be filled with Amazement at that Grace revealed unto us in this Gospel, at the Condescension of God, the low Stooping of God unto us. God hath reared up his Tabernacle among Men ; God hath condescended to dwell in very deed among Men, and said concerning Men, *I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* Upon what Foundation ? Why, just upon this Foundation, of God's being manifested in the Flesh ; the eternal Son of God his taking our Nature, his stooping to marry our Nature, is the Ground-Work of God's dwelling with Men upon Earth.

But, not to insist farther upon an Introduction, this Book of the *Revelation* is ordinarily and justly reckoned to contain deep and mysterious Prophecies ; the Things that are contained in this Book will exercise the Skill, Judgment and Faith of the most discerning in the militant Church in all Ages and Generations, until the Prophecy be fully accomplished. But yet it is a just Observation of One, that the holy Scriptures are like a River, wherein there are some shallow Places, that a Lamb may wade, and other Places so deep that an Elephant may swim. I may say of this Book, that it contains mysterious and dark Things, yet there are Truths scattered up and down in it, that may be Food to the weakest of the Flock of Christ. Among other Things, in this Text and Context you have the Flock of Christ characterized and described ; they are the Lamb's Retinue and Train, these who are on the Lamb's Side, with the Lamb on the Mount Zion, having his Name and his Father's Name

Name written on their Foreheads. Thus they are described in our Context; In the Words we have read they are designed, Such as follow the Lamb. *These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*

I had Occasion yesterday to open up and a little explain these Words, and the Doctrine that I observed from them was this,

That all that are with the Lamb, or are on the Lamb's Side, they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. In discoursing from this Doctrine, I proposed,

In the first Place, to speak a little concerning the Lamb, the worthy Lamb, the Leader of this Company.

1^{stly}. To speak a little to the Characters given to the Followers of the Lamb, his Retinue and Train, in the Text and Context.

3^{dly}. To shew what is imported in following the Lamb.

4^{thly}. To shew how, or by what Means, the Lamb's Retinue and Train do follow him.

5^{thly}. To shew where it is they do follow the Lamb.

6^{thly}. Give the Reasons of the Doctrine, or shew why all those who are with the Lamb, do follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

Lastly, To apply the Doctrine.

I spoke to the first of these yesterday, which was to speak a little concerning the worthy Lamb, the Leader of this happy Company, and shall not now insist upon it; only, in a few Words, the Lamb whom they follow, the worthy Lamb, he is mentioned under the Designation of a Lamb frequently
by

by this Apostle and Evangelist. In his Writings, in the first Verse, he is designed by him as a Lamb standing upon the Mount Zion, *that is*, the Gospel Church; and indeed he is the Glory of the Church, the Beauty and Excellency of the Church; all the Church's Beauty is derived from the worthy Lamb; the Lamb, in the Midst of the Retinue and Train that follow him, he is their Light, their Life, their Strength, their Hope, their Glory, their All; the Leader of the Company is just their All, and in all. He is the Captain of the Lord's Host, that glorious One, whom the glorious Hosts of Heaven do follow. Who can speak of him? Who can express his mighty Works? Who can shew forth all his Praise? If we speak of the Person of the Lamb, it is a wonderful Person. He is *Immanuel*, God with us; God manifested in the Flesh, God in our very Nature. Who can speak of this Mystery? Ay the more the Eye of Faith looks at this Mystery, it sees ay the more to be wondred at, of astonishing Wisdom, and amazing Grace and Love. The wonderful Glory and Condescendency, that is to be seen in looking at the Person of Christ, cannot be told; his Glory and Excellency cannot be expressed. He is the Lamb of God, the Lamb of God, chosen by God to be a propitiatory Sacrifice for the Expiation of our Guilt; he is the Lamb provided by God for a Burnt-Offering; he is the Lamb consecrated by God, set apart in the eternal Purpose of God, set apart in the Council of Peace, before the Foundation of the Earth was laid; set apart to be an Offering and Sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling Savour, in the Room and Stead of Sinners. Accordingly, in the Fulness of Time, he was actually sacrificed: *For, when the Fulness of Time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made*
under

under the Law, to redeem them who were under the Law : And being found in Fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross. He is this Day exhibited in Word and Sacrament, and you are called to behold the Lamb of God. O will you behold the Lamb of God, behold him in the Word, behold him in the Sacrament ! Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sin of the World !

I proceed to the second general Head which I proposed in the Method, and that is, to speak somewhat of the Characters given to the Lamb's Retinue and Train, in the Text and Context.

There is a particular Emphasis in the Manner of Expression, *These are they which follow the Lamb*, &c. Now, who are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth ? There are these four or five Characters of them laid down in the Text and Context, which I shall endeavour to take Notice of.

First, They are designed, such as were redeemed from the Earth, redeemed from among Men. *2dly*. They are designed, such as sing a new Song, that none can learn but the Hundred forty and four thousand, the Lamb's Retinue. *3dly*. They are designed, such as were not defiled with Women, for they are Virgins. *4thly*. They are designed, the first Fruits to God and the Lamb ; and, in the *last Place*, they are designed, Persons whose Mouths are without Guile.

Now, all I intend, at the Time, is just to drop a Word to these Characters given this blessed and happy Company who are on the Lamb's Side.

And, Oh that what we are to say may, through the Lord's Blessing, prove more instructing, convincing and confirming. In the first Place, these

the Lamb's Retinue and Train, they are designed such as were redeemed from the Earth. In the Gloss of the 3d Verse they are such as are redeemed from among Men. Now, there is a twofold Redemption by which they are redeemed. In the *first* Place there is a Redemption by Price; *adly*. A Redemption by Power.

In the *first* Place, I say, there is a Redemption by Price, by which the Followers of the Lamb are redeemed. The Lord Christ, the worthy Lamb, he paid the Price of their Redemption; he hath given his Life a Ransom for many, and so all the Lamb's Retinue and Train, they are a People redeemed to God by his Blood; as we have it in the 9th Chapter of this Book of the *Revelation*, and 9th Verse, *Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Tongue, Kindred, People, Nation and Language.* Thus you see the Price he paid for their Redemption, the Price of his Blood: *Redeemed us to God by thy Blood.* A valuable Price, a glorious Price, a costly Price, a Price like himself. *Redeemed us to God by thy Blood.*

adly. They who are redeemed from the Earth, they are redeemed by Power. This I take to be chiefly intended here, when they are said to be redeemed from the Earth, or from among Men who are sprung of Earth. Now they are redeemed from the Earth in the Day of their effectual Calling. Even when they are made a willing People in the Day of the Lamb's Power, then they are redeemed from the Earth; from among Men; *that is*, they are just separated from the rest of the World; *redeemed from the Earth*, that is, they are redeemed from that reigning Carnality, that earthly Mindedness that by Nature they themselves, as well as others,

are under. *Redeemed from the Earth*; from the Love of the Earth and earthly Things, from the Plague of Darkness and Blindness that overspreads the whole Earth; Darkness covers the Earth, and crosses Darkness the People. And, Sirs, those that are with the Lamb, who follow the Lamb, they are redeemed from this Darkness that covers the Earth; the Day-Spring from on high hath risen upon them, the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ hath shined into our Hearts. The Retinue of the worthy Lamb, they are a People that are called from Darkness to the Lord's marvellous Light, as you have it in the first Epistle of *Peter* II. 9. *Ye are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People, that ye should shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light.* Sirs, those that are with the Lamb, his Retinue and Train, they have other Views of the Majesty of God than the rest of the World have, they have other Views of an invisible God than others about them have. Why, they see him, in the Light of his Spirit, a God in Christ, a God of Glory and Excellency, shining in the Face and Person of his incarnate Son. God's Being and Perfection is a Mystery to all but them that are on the Lamb's Side, and even to them in a great Measure; but they see the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ, in another Manner than the World about them do, they are enlightened by the Spirit, redeemed from the Earth by the Power of the Redeemer, the worthy Lamb; they are redeemed from that Enmity that prevails, yea, that reigns in the Earth, in the Hearts of the Men of the Earth.

Sirs,

Sirs, when Sin entred into the World, as Darkness and Death entred by Sin, so Enmity against God entred by Sin, but Redemption by the Power of the Redeemer; it is the Recovery of the Soul of the sinful Man or Woman, from the reigning Power of that Enmity. There is an Enmity in the Heart naturally against God, which deters the proud Heart from submitting to the Righteousness of God, as it is expressed in the 10th Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, and 3d Verse of that Chapter. Where this natural Enmity and Unbelief is still dwelling, the proud Heart will not bow unto the Authority of God, nor stoop to the Law of God. Why, the Reason is, *it is Enmity against God, and is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can it be*: So till this Redemption by Power take the Field, which only is a conquering of this Enmity, an overcoming of this Enmity; and so soon as the worthy Lamb, the glorious Redeemer, steps in with his Almighty Power, why, then the proud Heart opens to the Son of God, the obstinate Sinner stoops to *Jehovah*, the obstinate Sinner is meekned by Faith's Views of the meek Lamb, the worthy Lamb, and so is made to stoop to the Righteousness of God, the Righteousness of the Lamb; made to stoop to the Way of Salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ the worthy Lamb; the Heart is made to stoop to God's Method of Grace, and Way of recovering Sinners from Sin and Wrath, through the Righteousness of the Lamb, through the Obedience, Death and Resurrection of his own eternal Son, the worthy Lamb. Thus the Lamb's Company, his Retinue and Train, they are redeemed from the Earth, from the Obstinacy that naturally reigns in the Heart against the Grace and Love of Christ, the Lamb of God, the worthy Lamb.

Again.

Again, the Lamb's Company are designed, *redeemed from the Earth*, because by Nature they bear the Image of the first *Adam*. The first Man, *Adam*, it is a Word that signifies *Earth, red Earth*, and all Mankind they bear the Image of this earthly *Adam*; and so, when the worthy Lamb comes under the Character of a Redeemer, he redeems his Followers from the Earth, from the earthly Image of the first *Adam*; and by Grace they are made to bear the Image of the second *Adam*, the second Man, who is the Lord from Heaven; and so all that have Experience of this Redemption (so to speak) they have the Image of the Lamb just drawn upon them. When Christ, the worthy Lamb, comes, and first pays a Visit unto a Soul, he just (so to speak) draws his Image and Picture upon the Man or Woman's Heart by that Visit. The very first Sight the Soul gets, by Faith, of the worthy Lamb, it just assimilates and changes the Sinner into the same Image with their glorious Head. Hence, saith the Apostle, *We all, with open Face, beholding as in a Glass the Glory of God, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory.* Try it then, Sirs; if ever you got a saving Sight of the glorious Image of the worthy Lamb, there is a Stamp of Christ left on you. We do not say it is alike discernible in all, for in some it may be but like the bruised Reed and the smoking Flax; but where this Image is stamped, however interceptible it may be, the bruised Reed he will not break, the smoking Flax he will not quench; for the first saving Discovery the Sinner gets of the Lord Christ, it leaves something of him behind it, that will remain ay till Grace be consummate in Glory. Hence saith our Lord, *John iv. 14. Whosoever drinketh of the Water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the Water that I shall give him,*

him, shall be in him a Well of living Water springing up unto everlasting Life.

It is very like some may be thinking themselves quite scored off by this Manner of speaking. Why, say you, I find nothing but Enmity, Atheism and Unbelief just prevailing and carrying all before them. But may I not appeal to such, Is there not a Party in thy Heart to bear Testimony for Christ, and against Sin, even in thy lowest Case? Is there not a secret Breathing in thy Heart, O for Deliverance from that woful Enmity! O for Deliverance from the Power of this Atheism and Unbelief! Let me ask you, Would you not, when at the very lowest, when Matters are at the very worst with you, would you not rejoice to have your spiritual Fetters broke off? Would you not rejoice to have your Feet set upon the Necks of your spiritual Enemies, Enmity, Atheism, Unbelief, and the like? Let me ask you, When ye are at the lowest, when you begin to reflect upon what has been the Lord's Way with you, is there not a Breathing in you, saying, *O that it were with me as in Months past, as in the Day when God preserved me, when his Candle shined upon my Head, &c. O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his Seat!* When these your Enemies are prevailing in or over you, is there not a Kind of Restlessness in you, you cannot find Rest any where until you come anew to Christ? O to be back to my Rest again! I think I will never be right till I see him again! If Matters are so with you, poor Soul, it is an Evidence you are redeemed from the Earth; and if there be really an inward Principle of Grace in thy Heart, there will be less or more of this Exercise in you; for where there is an inward Principle of Grace infused in the Heart of a Sinner, by the Spi-

of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is just something like the Needle in the Compass, that, through the Influence of the Lead-Stone, turn it where you will, it never rests until it turn to the Pole. So Believers, however dark, dismal and distressing their Case may be, yet the Soul can never have solid Rest, until it be pointed towards the great Pole, Christ Jesus the worthy Lamb. So much for the first Character I took notice of, which is given to the Followers of the Lamb, his Retinue and Train. 2dly. Another of their Characters who are on the Lamb's Side, is, *That they sing a new Song, that none can learn but the Hundred forty and four thousand, the Lamb's Retinue and Train.* This indeed is a Song, that none could or can learn, but such as are on the Lamb's Side; they that are with the Lamb. And, by the Way, this gives us to know, that the whole of Religion is a Mystery to natural Men; to unregenerate Men; it is all a Mystery to them; they cannot know the Things of the Spirit of God. Christ the Lamb is a hid Christ to them; the Gospel of Christ is a hid Gospel to them; the Love of Christ is hid Love as to them; the Grace of Christ is veiled to them: In one Word, all that Good that the Gospel reveals is hid from them: And that Word is true concerning them, *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine into their Hearts.* Thus we say the whole of Religion is a Mystery to natural Men: they know nothing of this Song, this new Song which is sung by the Lamb's Retinue and Train.

To be more particular on this Character of the Lamb's Followers, there are three Things I shall
a little

a little take notice of in this new Song, that none can learn but the Followers of the Lamb. In the *first* Place, there is the glorious Object of the Song; *2dly*. The Matter; and, *3dly*. the Manner of this Song; each of which are Mysteries to all but such as are with the Lamb.

In the *first* Place, there is the glorious Object of this new Song; none can learn the glorious Object of the Song, but such as are with the Lamb. Who then is the Object of the new Song? Why, the worthy Lamb himself is the Object of this Song; he is the Object of the Praise and the Wonder of all his Retinue and Train: They say concerning him, Thou art our Praise; each of them says for himself, *My Praise shall be of thee*. If it be asked, How it came about that he is the Object of their Song? We answer, in a Word, He is the Object of their Delight, of their Complacency, Satisfaction and Delight; the Object of their Wonder and Admiration, and therefore the Object of their Song. *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, Riches, Wisdom, Strength, Honour, Glory and Blessing*. Now, when it is said, none could learn this new Song but the Hundred forty and four Thousand, the Followers of the Lamb, the Meaning is, none could learn the Object of the Song but them; nor was it any Thing in them that contributed to their learning the Song; no, they have been all taught of God, they have all got a Lesson from above, from the worthy Lamb, which has not come in Word only, but in Power and in the Holy Ghost. They have been all taught by the Spirit, who convinceth the World of Sin; they have all known that powerful Instruction, that efficacious Instruction, which bows the stoutest Heart, and makes the stoutest Heart yield to the Lord Jesus Christ. And

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What is the great Lesson which has been taught them ? Why, it is Christ himself the worthy Lamb, Christ in his Person, in the infinite Glory of his divine Person : Christ in what he hath done, in what he is doing, in what he will do, is the great Lesson they have been taught, and is the Object of their Song, the great and glorious Object of the new Song, which none can learn or sing but the Lamb's Retinue and Train.

But then, in the *second Place*, as the Object of this Song is a Mystery, and what none can learn but the Followers of the Lamb, so the Matter of the Song is also a Mystery, that none can learn but them who are with the Lamb ; and as Christ, the Lamb himself, is the glorious Object of this Song, so he is also the great Matter of the Song ; it all centres in him as to the Matter of it ; it centres in what he has done and suffered ; it is a Song of the Death and Resurrection of the Lamb. What is the Matter of the Song ? It is a Song of the manifold Wisdom of God shining in the Face of the Lamb, and just beaming forth in what he hath done. What is the Matter of their Song ? Why, it is just a Song of the wonderful Love of God displayed in the Person and Undertaking of the worthy Lamb. Hence is that Word, *Rev. i. 5, 6. Unto him that loved us, and hath washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father ; unto him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever.* Again, What is the Matter of their Song ? It is just a Song of the Grace of God manifested and displayed in the Face of Jesus Christ, the worthy Lamb ; it is a Song of the Mercy of God venting through the worthy Lamb ; it is a Song of Mercy, a Song of the Seasonableness of Mercy, of the Rise and Progress of Mercy. Hence the

Church sings, *He remembered us in our low Estate for his Mercy endureth for ever.* What is the Matter of their Song? Why, the infinite Holiness of God, shining forth in the Undertaking and Performance of the worthy Lamb, is the subject Matter of their Song. So, in the Vision which *John* saw, *Rev. iv. 8.* the living Creatures, joined with the redeemed from among Men, rest not Day nor Night, from saying, or singing, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* Sirs, it is a Mark and Character of all who are among the Lamb's Retinue and Train, they love the Holiness of God shining in the worthy Lamb, as well as the Mercy of God through which they are saved; and this indeed is a Mystery that none can learn but they who are with the Lamb. Have you then learned the new Song, the Matter of the Song? If so be, you can in some Measure give Thanks at the Remembrance of his Holiness; you love the Holiness of God, and you celebrate the Holiness of God, as it shines in the worthy Lamb, as well as the Mercy of God. You love God because he is holy, and love to join the Retinue above, saying, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.* Thus you have learned the Matter of the Song. At whose Mouth have you learned this Note, to sing of his infinite Holiness? Why, just at the Mouth of the worthy Lamb, who cries out, *Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the Praises of Israel, Psalm xxii. 3.* This is his Cry; and the Faith of this makes all the Lamb's Followers, his Retinue and Train, cry out, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty.*

But then, in the third and last Place, upon this Character of the Lamb's Followers, as the Object and Matter of this new Song which they sing, are Myseries which none can learn but the Followers of the

the Lamb: so the Manner of the Song is a Mystery to all but such as are with the Lamb; none can sing the Song but they, because the Manner how they sing it, is what none can learn but his Retinue and Train. In what Manner then is it his Followers sing this new Song? Why, as the Song is not a carnal, but a spiritual Song, so they who sing it, they sing it with a new Heart and a new Spirit: Such as sing it, they have got the new Heart and new Spirit; they are sanctified by the Spirit of Christ. How is this Song sung? Why, it is sung in Faith; it proceeds from Faith in the Object of the Song, whom Flesh and Blood doth not reveal to the Soul, but his Father which is in Heaven. It is just in a Way of Faith and Believing that this Song is sung; for Faith is just a giving Glory and Praise to God; Glory to the worthy Lamb. Hence it is said of *Abraham, He staggered not at the Promise of God, through Unbelief, but was strong in the Faith, giving Glory to God.* Thus, we say, the glorious Object, the Matter, and the Manner of this new Song, are all Mysteries to such as are not with the Lamb, but are taught unto his Retinue and Train. But

I proceed to a *third* Character I took notice of, of the Lamb's Retinue and Train, the Followers of the worthy Lamb; and you have it in the first Part of the Verse which I have read, where they are designed, Such as were not defiled with Women: *These are they which are not defiled with Women, for they are Virgins.* The Expressions are figurative; the Apostle hath a Commentary upon them in his 2d Epistle to the *Corinthians*, 11th Chapter and 2d Verse, *I have espoused you to one Husband, (saith he) that I may present you as a chaste Virgin to Christ.* The Meaning is, This Retinue and Train, the blessed Company here spoken of, they were chaste unto their Husband
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the Lord Jesus Christ, in a Day of general Defection and Apostasy from him; they were chaste unto him in the Time of the Apostasy and Defection that took Place; particularly, under the Reign of Antichrist, which is principally intended in this Place, that Remnant were kept chaste and pure from the general Defection and Apostasy that then prevailed. They did not defile themselves with the Sins and Whoredoms of the Day, the Snares of the Time wherein they lived. They are chaste Virgins unto Christ their Husband; they observe the Ordinances and Institutions of their Husband. In Scripture it is called spiritual Whoredom and Idolatry, to corrupt the Ordinances and Institutions of Christ; and so, when the Members of a visible Church do depart from the Purity of the Ordinances and Institutions of Christ; they are justly chargeable with spiritual Whoredom, and Unchastity to their Husband Christ. It is the special Character of the Retinue of the Lamb, that they are not defiled with Women, for they are Virgins, chaste Virgins, chaste in their Endeavour to keep pure and intire all such religious Worship and Ordinances as he hath appointed in his Word; chaste in their Obedience unto the Laws and Authority of Christ, as their great Lord and Lawgiver; chaste in their Love to and Esteem of Christ; chaste in their Affections to and Desires after Christ. But, more particularly, those who are with the Lamb, his Retinue and Train, their Chastity may be known, and doth evidence itself, in all these particular Characters following.

In the *first* Place, their Chastity may be known, and doth evidence itself, in their Fear of Sin, and Desire to be kept from sinning; they desire to be kept pure in a sinning Time, in a defiling Age and Time.

Time, in an ensnaring Time ; particularly, they desire to be kept from the Sins and Snares that prevail in the Time and Place where they live. They are more afraid of Sin than of any Thing else. It was a good Saying of an eminent private Christian, who was brought before the Justiciary in the late Times of Persecution ; when they were desiring him not to lie, he answered, *I am more afraid to lie, than to die.* That which the Lord's People count Tenderness, the World reckons Nicety, Hypocrisy and Preciseness. But, O Sirs, regard them not ; it is good to be tender, it is a dangerous Thing to give a squint Look to Christ's Rivals, or to give an adulterous Look to Idols.

In the 2^d Place, the Chastity of the Lamb's Retinue may be known, and doth evidence itself, in their hearty Concern for, and Regard unto the declarative Glory of the Lamb. The Lamb is very jealous of his own Glory ; and so all his Followers, who are taught of him, they mingle Interests with him, and become also jealous of his declarative Glory, and concerned for the Advancement of his declarative Glory ; and there are weighty Reasons it should be so, if we consider, that it includes all the positive Ordinances and Institutions of God, and of the Lamb their Husband ; and the second Commandment in the Moral Law itself, doth fix upon every one of us an Obligation to be tender of all the Ordinances and Institutions of Christ ; to be tender of his declarative Glory : But, alas, Sirs, tho' all are bound to this Tenderness, by the Law of God, how few know any Thing of it ! Many think light of the declarative Glory of the Lamb, think light of his Ordinances and Institutions, at this Day. For Instance, How many think the Government of his House a light Matter, at this Day ? Be it known unto

unto them, who think the Government of Christ's House a light Matter, and not to be contended for, so far they are from the Character of the Followers of the Lamb, that they are guilty of spiritual Fornication and Adultery, whoever they be. Why, say some, we ought not to be concerned about the Government of Christ's House. What have we to do with this? It is not necessary unto Salvation, it is none of the Essentials of Religion; we will hold by the Essentials, but as for the Government of his House, it is not absolutely necessary to Salvation. Oh what a gross Saying is this! If the Government be thrown aside; I say, if the Government of the House be cast by, the Ordinances of the House will not stand long pure. If once the Hedge of Government be taken away, why, then all Passengers will pluck at the Ordinances and Institutions of the House; the very wild Beasts of the Field, and the Boar out of the Wood, will waste it at their Pleasure. Christ, the worthy Lamb, the Lord of his own House, he is a jealous God, he is very zealous for his own Glory, he will have all Things in his House, to the very least Pin, managed according to the Pattern shewn in the Mount. And truly, Sirs, he who is the chaste Virgin, not defiled with Women, he regardeth all the Ordinances and Institutions of Christ's House, and the Order and Government of his House no less. As for that selfish Spirit of theirs, who pretend a Regard to those Things they call Essentials of Religion, I shall only say this, their Regard is not much to be regarded, who take upon them to disregard any Part of what relates to the declarative Glory of the Lamb. Such a Temper as this is perillous, and exceeding displeasing in his Sight; and we may be sure of this one Thing,

that

that where God has reared up his House, made the Land a covenanted Land, and even there Matters come to this sad Pass, of disregarding the Government of his House, as a Thing of no Moment, it is an awful Prelude, that the Lord will shortly plead a Controversy with the Land. Sirs, something might be born with such as have not arrived at the same Degree of Reformation that *Scotland* has arrived at. Let such as make light of these Things take it as they will, God looks upon it as Spiritual Adultery, and going a-whoring from the worthy Lamb.

In the 3^d and last Place, the Chastity of the Lamb's Retinue may be known, and doth evidence itself, in their sincere Love and Affection to the worthy Lamb their Husband; and a chaste Love unto the Lord Christ, it very well becomes all his Followers; their Love ought to be chaste and pure, their Affections ought to be chaste and pure; Christ, the worthy Lamb, ought to have the chief Room in their Heart and Affections, and it well becomes him to have it; and it is spiritual Fornication and Adultery, if any Thing beside him have it; if other Things, beside Christ, are entertained before him in any Heart or Affections, it is a sad Sign that Heart is not yet opened to the worthy Lamb. This then is another Character of the Followers of the worthy Lamb, his Retinue and Train, *They are not defiled with Women, for they are Virgins.* They are chaste unto the Lord Christ; chaste in the Hatred of Sin, chaste in their Concern for the declarative Glory of, chaste in their Love and Affections towards the worthy Lamb.

But

I proceed to a fourth Character of those who follow the Lamb, his Retinue and Train, and you have

have it in the Close of the Verse which I have read, where they are designed, *the first Fruits unto God and the Lamb.* Now, if it is inquired, why the Lamb's Retinue are designed, *the first Fruits unto God.* I answer in these two Observations. In the *first Place*, you know, under the old Testament, the first Fruits were consecrated unto God; and so they who follow the Lamb, they are a Company consecrated unto God; they have consecrated and devoted themselves unto the Lord, and they just look upon themselves to be the devoted Thing, which belongs to God as his Due and Right. As the first ripe Fruits were presented to the Lord, so the Lamb's Followers, they answer that Exhortation of the Apostle, *I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of God, that ye present your Bodies (a Part put for the whole Man, by an usual Figure) a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable Service.* We say, they consecrate themselves wholly unto him; they consecrate and devote their Hearts and Souls unto him; they consecrate and devote their Affections and Love unto him; in a Word, they devote all the Powers and Faculties of their Souls unto him; they devote all the Members of their Bodies unto him; they devote likewise their Wealth and Substance unto him; all that they can call theirs, they are content it be the Lord's. Thus they are the first Fruits unto God, and to the Lamb. The first Fruits, you know, are but a small Part of the Crop, and so the Expression intimates the Paucity of the Number who are with the Lamb: *Many are called, but few are chosen. Strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way, that leadeth to Life, and few there be that find it.* There are many Professors at this Day, Sirs; but, alas, how few know the Mysteries of the

the Kingdom of God? How few know the Mystery of Religion? *Many are called, but few are chosen.* The Lamb's Retinue and Train, I say, are but like the first Fruits, which are but a small Part of the Crop: They are sometimes fewer in one Period than in another, but still, even when they are most numerous, they are but like the first Fruits, in comparison of the great Bulk who are not of the Lamb's Retinue and Train. Some think the Expression here respects such a Time as that, when the Lamb has but a very thin Backing, in comparison of the Multitude wondring after the Beast, and who of consequence go down the Stream of Defection. I remember an Expression of worthy *Rutherford*, in one of his Letters, when Episcopacy was like to get the Ascendant in this Land; saith he, *The Question shall be, Few Noblemen, if any, few Barons, if any, few Gentry, if any, to stand it out.* It is brought to this with us, Sirs; few Noblemen, if any, few Barons, if any, to take the Cause of Christ by the Hand in Scotland: Few Ministers and few Commons to take the Cause of Christ by the Hand; they are comparatively like the first ripe Fruits. But,

adly. There is another Observation I would make on the first Fruits. The first Fruits, you know, are a Token of an approaching Harvest, and some think the Expression here points at the Time when there will be a glorious Enlargement of the Church and Kingdom of Christ, when the Lord begins the Quarrel against Antichrist. Well, tho' the Followers of the Lamb be but like the first Fruits, yet the first Fruits to God and to the Lamb, they go before a plentiful Crop and Ingathering under the Lamb's Banner. Sirs, here then is good News. However low the Lamb's Cause may be brought,

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however few his Retinue and Train may be in certain Periods, yet the Lamb shall be uppermost, the Lamb shall gain the Day, ere all be done ; the Lamb shall have a glorious Retinue and Train : the Lamb shall have a plentiful Gathering in of Souls to him ; the first Fruits secure the Harvest : What Trials and Difficulties may be in our Way in a Way of witnessing for the Lamb, in this Day of backsliding and declining, we know not ; however, in the mean Time, Faith may feed upon this : that the first Fruits to God and to the Lamb, both proceed and secure a glorious Harvest and Ingathering of Souls to the Lamb's Retinue and Train. This is good News, good Food for Faith, and we may believe it shall be so ; for *Jehovah* hath said concerning the Lamb's Retinue, *Psalms lxxii. 16. There shall be an Handful of Corn in the Earth, on the Top of the Mountain ; the Fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the City shall flourish like Grass of the Earth.* And of the Lamb himself, *Verse 17. His Name shall endure for ever ; his Name shall be continued as long as the Sun ; and Men shall be blessed in him ; all Nations shall call him blessed.*

The 5th and last Character I took notice of which is given to the Followers of the Lamb, his Retinue and Train, you have it in the 5th Verse where they are designed, Persons in whose Mouths is no Guile : *And in their Mouth was found no Guile, for they are without Fault before the Throne of God.* This Character of the Lamb's Retinue, we see, is twofold.

In the first Place, they are said to be without Guile : *In their Mouths was found no Guile ;* that is their Heart is with their Mouth, they correspond together ; the Word of their Mouth is the Thought of their Heart. Many dissemble in their Profession concerning the worthy Lamb, they shew much Love in their Profession. With their Mouth and

Lip they profess to draw near to God, but, in the mean Time, their Heart goeth after their Covetousness ; and so that is a dissembling Profession. But it is otherways with the Followers of the Lamb ; in their Mouth is no Guile ; their Heart and their Mouth agree together, their Heart and Profession correspond together. All that are with the Lamb, and follow the Lamb, they are single and true-hearted Men : They that are the Lamb's true Followers, they are single for the Lamb's Glory and Honour ; they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Many take up a Profession of Religion, in a fair Day, and they just lay it down again, when this and the other Temptation or Trial casts in the Way. Try your Profession, Sirs. (If you be the Lamb's Followers, you will have Mouths this far without Guile, that your Heart and Profession will agree together ; and so, when the Heart and Profession do correspond and agree together, then they have the other Part of the Character, as it follows, *they are without Fault before the Throne of God.*

If it be asked, How are they without Fault before the Throne of God ? I answer, They are without Fault in a two-fold Respect. In the 1st Place, They are without Fault in regard of their Justification ; 2^{dly}. In respect of their Sanctification.

In the *first* Place, I say, the Retinue of the Lamb are without Fault in regard of their Justification, *being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, Rom. iii. 24. When God pardons the Sins of his People in Justification, he just casts them all into the Depths of the Sea, and accepts their Persons as righteous in his Sight, only for the Righteousness of the Lamb ; and in this Respect they are all without Fault before the Throne of God ; having their Sins washed away
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in his Blood, and their Persons accepted through, and covered with the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, the worthy Lamb. He is just their Clothing, their Ornament, their only Covering before God, and they are all beautified with his Excellency, and made comely with his Comeliness: And hence it follows that they are without Fault before the Throne of God, in respect of their Justification. But then,

In the 2^d Place, the Lamb's Followers are without Fault in respect of their Sanctification. Altho' the Work of Sanctification be but imperfect while the Soul is in this World, yet the Work of Sanctification is a progressive Work, it is growing up to Perfection; yea, even in this World it hath a Perfection of Parts, altho' it is not perfect as to its Measure and Degree; and this begun Perfection, this Perfection of Parts, is an undoubted Pledge and Evidence of a full Perfection, as to Measure and Degree, in due Time; for all that are with the Lamb, who follow the worthy Lamb, they shall be presented before the Throne of God, washed with Water by the Word; so sanctified and cleansed, that there they shall appear, *not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing; holy and without Blemish*, Eph. v. 26, 27.

Now, Sirs, thus have I set before you some of the Characters of the Lamb's Retinue and Train, the Followers of the worthy Lamb. Have you been applying as I have been speaking? What has been said may be improven, as Marks and Evidences by which you may try yourselves, whether you are among the Lamb's Retinue or not. Try it, then, Sirs. Are you redeemed from the Earth, redeemed from among Men, redeemed by the Price of the Lamb's Blood, and by the Power of his

his Spirit ? Are ye among those who have learned the new Song, which none can learn but such as are with the Lamb, and follow the Lamb ? Have you ever been taught of God, taught the mysterious Song, which is a Mystery to all but the Lamb's Retinue and Train ? Have you learned the Object of the Song, the Matter of the Song, and the Manner of the Song ? Again, are you such as are not defiled with Women, who are Virgins ? Are you chaste to the worthy Lamb your Husband, chaste in your Hatred of Sin, chaste in your Concern for his declarative Glory, &c ? Are you the first Fruits to God, and to the Lamb ? And, finally, are you ranked and numbred among those in whose Mouths is no Guile, and who are without Fault before the Throne of God ? Does your Heart and your Mouth correspond together ? Are you justified by the Righteousness of the Lamb, and sanctified by his Spirit ? Why, then you have the Lamb's Call to go to his Table ; to take the Seal of his Covenant, the confirming Seal of his Love ; to remember him, and what he hath done for you ? He hath given himself for you ; and go ye, then, and take a View of the worthy Lamb in the Sacrament, in the Ordinance of his Supper. Go, and there behold the Lamb of God.

I cannot proceed farther upon this Subject at the Time. The Lord bless his Word, and to his Name be Praise.

ORWELL,

ORWELL, Monday, 7 August 1738.

REV. xiv. 4.

*These are they which follow the Lamb
whithersoever he goeth.*

MY Friends, we are assembled together this Day, to give Thanks unto the Lord, the worthy Lamb, on a Thanksgiving-Day, after a solemn Communion-Day : We are assembled together to sing Praises to our great King, the King of Zion, who is gone up with a Shout, as in the *Psalm* sung in the Entry. He is gone up with a Shout, he hath ascended up on high, he hath ascended up with a Shout of Victory over his Enemies, he hath spoiled Principalities and Powers, and made a Shew of them openly upon the Cross : And, upon the Back of his Victory upon the Cross, he hath gone up with a Shout unto his Throne, to his Crown above, where he reigns and rules, and will do so until all his Enemies be made his Footstool. O Sirs, upon the Back of a solemn Communion-Sabbath, what think you of Zion's King, the worthy Lamb ? Have you got any Sight of his Beauty, Glory, and transcendent Excellency ? If so be, what think you of him ? What think you of the Prince of the King's of the Earth, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords ? I am sure, my Friends, if you have got any spiritual Views of the Lamb, of the Glory of this great King

King, who is gone up with a Shout, then your Souls have been made to bow unto him, to stoop unto him, to give the Obedience of Faith unto him, and you have been made to say concerning this King. Let him reign over me, let him sway the Sceptre over me, just in my Heart. O let him be great in my Heart, let him be exalted there, let him be all there ! O he is worthy to be exalted, worthy to be honoured, worthy to be glorified, and worthy to be set on high above all ; for he is that King, that God who has gone up with a Shout, with a triumphant Shout, with a magnificent Shout, a victorious Shout. And, Sirs, I tell you to-day, that this King, who has gone up with a Shout, will, in like Manner, in a little Time, come down with a Shout. The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of God. O what a Shout will that be ? Why, it shall be heard in all the Ends of the Earth ; it will be a Shout that will gather all Nations before him ; it will be a Shout that will gather his redeemed and ransomed Ones together before him, to go to Glory with him ; it will be a Shout that will gather all his Enemies before him, to receive their final Doom from him. Here is a Mark of the genuine Followers of the Lamb, they long for this Shout. The Old Testament Church longed for the Time when this King should come and finish his Work, and go up with a Shout : The new Testament Church longs for the Time when he shall descend with a Shout. When they think of his descending with a Shout, they cry, *Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus.* Well, his Work is going on, and in a very little his Work will be finished. It is long since he said, *Behold, I come quickly.* And he who said,

Behold,

Behold, I come quickly, he is coming apace; he will come in a little, and gather all his Followers together to be ever with the Lord. We are met together this Day to give Thanks to this King who is gone up with a Shout; and, Sirs, in our solemn Assembly a Shout of longing, for his descending with a Shout, should go up to him who is gone up with a Shout. And is there any Longing among you for that Day, that happy Day, that blessed Day, when the Lamb shall descend with a Shout, and when all the Members of his mystical Body shall be gathered together, with the Lamb at the Head of the Company, and the whole Company of the redeemed from among Men at the Lamb's Back, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing: The whole Company with the Lamb, come ly through his Comeliness upon them; the whole Company like unto the Lamb, all shining with the Glory of the worthy Lamb. O long for that happy Day! Let every one that is amongst the Lamb's Company, his ransomed Ones, cry out, Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Let this be your Language, Sirs, when we are this Day to part one from another: We know not what may be before another Season of Communion come; but what ever be, my Friends, I tell you good News this Day, Zion's King lives, Zion's King reigns, the Government is laid upon his Shoulders, and surely the Children of Zion have good Reason to be glad, and rejoice in their King. What ever dark Things may be in the Womb of Providence, it is good our King lives; our King is and will be exalted; our King will manage all for the real Good of his Subjects. Let the Children of Zion rejoice in their King, let them glory in their King, let them commit all their Concerns to their King. Let us look

to him to give us a parting Blessing with his Word this Day, that ye who know this King may go away more confirmed and established, before shaking Winds blow : Indeed shaking Winds are already blowing, but they may blow higher and higher, till a Hurricane of the Lord's Wrath come to avenge his Quarrel with the Isles of the Sea. But I proceed.

In the first four or five Verses of this Chapter, which is a Part of the Vision which the Apostle John, the Penman of this Book, saw, the Lamb's Retinue and Train are described by several Characters; and, among other distinguishing Characters of them, the Spirit of God takes Notice, that they are such as follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth : *These are they which follow the Lamb, &c.* I have spoken twice on these Words already upon this Occasion. After opening up the Words, the Doctrine I offered from them was,

That all that are with the Lamb, or are on the Lamb's Side, they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. The Method I proposed for discoursing from this Doctrine, was, in the first Place, to speak a little concerning the worthy Lamb, the Leader of this Company.

2dly. To mention some of the Characters given to the Followers of the Lamb, his Retinue and Train.

3dly. To shew what is imported in following the Lamb.

4thly. To shew how, or by what Means, the Lamb's Retinue and Train do follow him.

5thly. To shew wherein they do follow the Lamb.

6thly. Give the Reasons of the Doctrine, or shew why all those who are with the Lamb, do follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

And, *lastly*, make Application.

I have already spoken somewhat, 1st, concerning the worthy Lamb; and, 2dly. somewhat of those who follow him, his Retinue and Train. I shall proceed now to the *third* general Head in the Method, which was, to shew what is imported or implied in following the Lamb. I shall only offer a few Particulars briefly on this Head.

In the *first* Place, then, to follow the Lamb does import the Knowledge of the Lamb, some Uptaking of and Acquaintance with the Lamb. What we have in the 4th Chapter of *Matthew*, and 20th Verse, is plain to this Purpose. When our Lord made himself known to *Andrew* and *Peter*; then, it is said, they forsook their Nets and followed him. It is just a saving Discovery of the Lamb that draws the Soul after him. They that follow the Lamb, they have got some positive Acquaintance with the Lamb, and this Acquaintance is given to them, *first*, in their effectual Calling, when they are called out of Darkness to the Lord's marvellous Light. When God, who commanded Light to shine out of Darkness, shines into their Hearts, giving the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ, then the Face of lowering, cast over all People, is taken off them: We say, just when the Lord manifests himself in a saving Manner, then it is they are drawn forth towards the Lamb; then it is they are made to follow the Lamb; then it is they are made to say, *Where thou goest I will go, where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy People shall be my People, and thy God my God*, as *Ruth* said to *Naomi*. What think you, Sirs, does first effectually draw a

Sinner

Sinner to Christ? Why, it is just a saving Display of the Glory of Christ conveying the saving Knowledge of Christ into the Heart of the Sinner. But then,

In the 2^d Place, following the Lamb, it does import and imply a Principle of spiritual Life. A dead Sinner cannot follow Christ. It is very true, all the Followers of the Lamb are by Nature dead in Trespases and Sins, as well as others: But the Lamb, he sends forth his quickning Spirit into their Hearts, and so, in effectual Calling, they are made to hear his quickning Voice: As in the 10th Chapter of Ezekiel and 6th Verse, *I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy Blood, Live: Yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy Blood, Live.* The Lamb makes them hear his Voice, which is a quickning Voice, a Life-giving Voice; and so, upon hearing the Lamb's Voice, they are immediately led out to follow the Lamb: So, I say, to follow the Lamb, does imply that there is a Principle of spiritual Life implanted in them. Again,

In the 3rd Place, following the Lamb does import or include in it, the voluntary Subjection of Faith unto the worthy Lamb. Indeed, in that Day when the Lord Jesus Christ shines into the Heart of a Sinner, in that Day when he says unto a dead Sinner, *Live*, then there is the voluntary Subjection of Faith unto him: In the Day of Power, the Day wherein the Obstinacy and Stiffness of the Heart is overcome, in that very same Day the willing People comes unto him and follows him; according to that Word of Promise in the 110th Psalm, and 3d Verse, *Thy People shall be willing in the Day of thy Power.* The Day of Power is a Day wherein there is a voluntary Subjection unto the Lamb, to follow the Lamb. We find Unbelief exprest by not submitting

submitting to the Righteousness of God, *Rom. x. 3.*
 What is Unbelief? Why, it is just the very opposite
 of this voluntary Consent and Subjection of Faith
 unto the worthy Lamb: It is just the proud Heart re-
 fusing to stoop to the Righteousness of God, unto the
 Righteousness which is by Faith, unto God's Way
 of Salvation by rich and free Grace. And, upon the
 other Hand, if you ask, What is Faith? Why,
 it is just the Heart submitting to the Righteousness
 of God, the voluntary Subjection of the Soul unto
 the Lord Jesus Christ the worthy Lamb. In this
 Day of his Power, the natural Pride and Obstinacy
 of the Heart is broken and brought down, the proud
 Heart is brought down, is humbled, and they will
 just bow to the Lord Jesus Christ, stoop to the
 Righteousness of God which is by Faith in Christ
 Jesus, stoop to the Way and Method of Salvation
 by Christ Jesus. Faith is just a Sinner's Renoun-
 cing all Hope of Salvation from the Hills and Mul-
 titudes of Mountains, and a cheerful submitting un-
 to Salvation by the free Grace of God through
 Christ Jesus: It is just a Sinner's subscribing himself
 a Debtor unto rich and free Grace, to the Sovereign
 Grace of God venting in Christ Jesus the worthy
 Lamb. And so, we say, in following the Lamb
 there is included the voluntary Subjection of Faith
 unto him; and in this voluntary Subjection, besides
 what we have said, there is a Giving the Lamb his
 proper Names and Characters. The Soul is made
 to call him, *Lord*, and this none can do but by the
 Spirit of the Lord Christ: And as he gets his pro-
 per Names, so the Soul, thus subjected to him, it
 stoopeth to his Authority and Government. It says,
 upon the Matter, let him rule over me, let him reign
 and rule in and over me, by his Word, by his Grace
 and Spirit: Let him sway his Sceptre over me: let

let all the Powers and Faculties of my Soul be obedient and pay Homage unto him; let his Throne be set up in my Heart; let him alone be enthroned there. But, not to insist,

In the 4th Place, following the Lamb, it imports or includes a close Conjunction with the Lamb. All the Followers of the Lamb, so to speak, they are closely conjoined with the Lamb: There is such a close Conjunction between him and them, that they are one Spirit with him. O wonderful is that Oneness that is between the Lamb and all his Followers. They have just one Spirit with the worthy Lamb; that Spirit that rests upon him, that is given unto him without Measure, above all Measure, even that same Spirit takes up his Residence in the Hearts of all the Followers of the Lamb. They are an Habitation of God through the Spirit, they are Temples of the Holy-Ghost, in which he dwells. He takes up his Residence in them; and so, if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his: If any Man have not the Spirit of the Lamb, he is not among the Followers of the Lamb. There is a close Conjunction between the Lamb and all the Followers of the Lamb: The Lamb and his Followers, they have, so to speak, one common Cause; the Cause of the Lamb is the Cause of all his Followers. No sooner does the Sinner take his Standard on the Lamb's Side, but immediately the Lamb's Cause is his Cause: They have one common Cause; and hence, whatever affects the Lamb does likewise, so to speak, affect them. The Dishonours done to the Lamb affect the Followers of the Lamb: The Indignities done to the Lamb affect the Followers of the Lamb: The great Indignities done to the Lamb, they take as done to them, as a great Affront and Indignity done to them,

them, yea, as the greatest Hurt that can be done to them. The Lamb and his Followers have such a close Conjunction together, that that which affects him the Head, affects them as his Members, yea, what affects them, does likewise affect him; for, saith he, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of mine Eye.* They have just common Friends and common Foes. *Psalms cxxxix. 21, 22. Do not I hate them, O Lord, (saith the Psalmist) that hate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect Hatred: I count them mine Enemies.*

But, again, in the 5th Place, to follow the Lamb, it imports a close Correspondence with the Lamb. All that are with Lamb, and follow the Lamb, they have a close Correspondence and Intimacy with him. The Lamb, so to speak, communicates and imparts all his Secrets to them. Ye have a remarkable Word to this Purpose in the 15th Chapter of John, and 15th Verse, *Henceforth (saith Christ) I call you no more Servants, for the Servant knoweth not what his Lord doth; but I have called you Friends, for all Things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.* The Lamb, so to speak, imparts to his Followers all the Secrets which his Father has imparted unto him. And what are these Secrets, think you, which he imparts to his Followers? Why, he imparts the great Secrets of the Covenant of Grace to them. The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant, *Psalms xxv. 14.* What are the great Secrets he imparts unto them? Why, his Name it is secret, and he imparts his Name unto them: He just imparts himself unto them, the Glory of his Person unto them. But as, in this close Correspondence, the Lamb imparts his

his Secrets to his Followers, so his Followers, so to speak, they just impart their Secrets unto him. They can freely impart all their Grievances unto him : They can tell him what they cannot communicate to any Body else : They can tell him what they cannot tell to their nearest Relation upon Earth. There is a wonderful holy Familiarity between them and the Lamb : He just tells them plainly of the Father, and of himself, and even of themselves : He tells them all Things ever they did, and they tell him all their Heart.

I shall only add, in the *sixth* and *last* Place, to follow the Lamb, it imports or implies, that the Lamb stands in a manifold Relation to his Followers. He stands in the Relation of a Friend unto them ; hence he calls them no more Servants, but Friends : He stands in Relation of a Brother unto them ; wherefore he is not ashamed to call them Brethren : He stands in Relation of a Father unto them : *I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.* At the last Day he will present them unto the Father, saying, *Behold, here am I, and the Children whom thou hast given me !* The Lamb's Followers, they are his spiritual Seed. Again, he stands in the Relation of an Husband unto them ; *Thy Maker is thine Husband, &c.* But when they are designed, *These are they which follow the Lamb*, the Expression points at some particular Relation besides these Generals we have mentioned. What then is the particular Relation pointed at, when they are said to follow the Lamb ? Why, it points out, or imports, that he stands in the Relation and Character of a Leader unto them : *Behold, I have given him for a Leader unto the People !* He is the great Leader given by Jehovah the Father unto the People ; and all that are

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on the Lamb's Side, they follow the Lamb as their Leader: They just follow the Lamb, as their Leader, through all the difficult and different Steps of their Wilderness Journey, and they resign themselves wholly to the leading of the Lamb. *Thou wilt guide me with thy Counsel while here, and afterwards receive me to Glory.* But not only does this Expression point at the particular Relation of a Leader, but it says also, that the Lamb stands in the particular Relation of a Commander unto his Followers, his Retinue and Train. *Jehovah* has not only given him for a Leader, but also for a Commander unto his People. All the Armies in Heaven and Earth, who know the Lamb, they follow him as their great Commander. All the Armies in Heaven, his Retinue and Train, they follow him in their Robes, which are of fine Linen, clean and white: They follow his Commands and Orders, because he is the blest and only Potentate; the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; the Prince of the Kings of the Earth. And the Truth is, he stands in this Relation to them, of being their King: He who is the Captain-General of the Lord's Host, the Captain-General of the Armies in Heaven and Earth, the Captain-General of all the redeemed Company about the Throne, he is their King and rightful Lord; and so it is most fit he should go at their Head, and they at his Back, ready to obey all his Commandments who is their Leader and Commander. But I shall not insist farther upon this Head.

I shall now proceed to the *fourth* general Head in the Method, which was, to shew how and by what Means the Lamb's Retinue and Train do follow him. How then does this happy Company follow the Lamb? I answer, in the *first* Place, they follow

follow him by frequent Meditations upon him, You have a Word to this Purpose in the 63d Psalm, and 6th Verse, *When I remember thee upon my Bed, and meditate upon thee in the Night-Watches, my Soul followeth hard after thee.* This Company, they love to meditate upon the Lamb, they love to think upon the Lamb, they love to think upon his Undertaking, they love to think upon what he hath done, they love to think upon what he is doing, they love to think upon what he hath promised to do, and they love to think upon what he will do, and do for them, yea, they love to think upon the happy Time, when they shall be admitted into the Immediate Presence of the Lamb : And thus they follow the Lamb, by frequent Meditations upon the Lamb.

In the 2d Place, How do they follow the Lamb ? They do it by their fervent Breathings and Desires after him, after Access to him, after the Enjoyment of him ; they long for Access into his Presence. O say, they *draw me, we will run after thee*, Song i. 4. They follow him by earnest Longings to be in his Company, to have the Enjoyment of his Presence for ever. Ye find his Followers expressing themselves after this Manner, Psalm ci. 2. *O when wilt thou come unto me ! And with Job, O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his Seat !* What is it that brings them to Ordinances and Institutions of his Appointment ? Why, it is just this fervent Breathing for him, that there they may find him, draw near unto him, and worship him ; behold his Beauty, and enquire in his Temple : As in that 27th Psalm and 4th Verse, *One Thing* (says the Psalmist) *have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the House of the Lord all the Days of my Life, that I may behold the Beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his*
F Temple.

Temple. Why, Sirs, What is the Reason the Lamb's Followers love so well to come to Ordinances, to Communion? The Reason is, they just want another View of the Glory of the Lamb there, they expect to see the Glory of the Lamb there, and so they follow him in the Word, they follow him in the Sacrament, they follow him in secret Duties; in one Word, they follow him in all the Duties of his own Appointment, just that there they may have Communion with him, that there may have they a Correspondence with him, that there they may see his Glory, that there they may hear from him, and that he may speak unto them. But then, again, in the

3^d Place, the Lamb's Followers, they follow him by an entire Subjection and Obedience unto him, All that are the true and genuine Followers of the Lamb, they give (so to express it) an implicate Obedience unto him; but then it is a judicious Obedience, for it flows from Knowledge of the Lamb. *They follow him whithersoever he goeth.* When he says, *Go*, they go; and *Come*, they come. They credit his Word, when they cannot tell what is wrapt up in the Word: They credit his Word of Promise, and go forth at his Call, even when they cannot see his Ways. They give an implicate Obedience unto the Lamb, when, in the mean Time, they know not what their Obedience may cost them. You have a memorable Instance of this in the 11th Chapter to the *Hebrews*, and 8th Verse, where it is said concerning *Abraham*, *That by Faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a Place which he should after receive for an Inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went.* He just gave implicate Obedience to the Call and Command of God, and he went out, not knowing whither

whither he went./ So all the true Followers of the Lamb, they so far give implicate Obedience to the Commands of the Lamb, that, even when they cannot see what is in the Womb of Providence, they hearken to his Word of Command, tho' it be never so hard-like or difficult; yea, not only so, but they can credit the Word of God, in Obedience to the Lamb, even when the Providence of God seems quite to contradict the Promise of God, just when Providence seems to fly in the Face of the Promise. This likewise is evident in the Case of Abraham, in the 4th Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, from the 18th Verse and downward, *Who against Hope believed in Hope, that he might become the Father of many Nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy Seed be. And, being not weak in Faith, he considered not his own Body now dead, when he was about an Hundred Years old, neither yet the Deadness of Sarah's Womb. He staggered not at the Promise of God, through Unbelief, but was strong in the Faith, giving Glory to God, being fully perswaded, that what he had promised he was able also to perform.* Thus the Followers of the Lamb, they credit God's naked Word of Promise, even when the Course of his Providence seems directly to contradict the Promise; yea, whatever Difficulties may seem, in their View of Matters, to be in the Way of the Accomplishment of the Promise, they follow the Lamb, by giving Obedience to every one of his Commandments, and that without Exemption to any one of them: They see him to be the only Lawgiver, and so they follow him as their only Lawgiver, saying, *The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us.* And so, if the Commands of Men happen to interfere with the Command and Authority of the Lamb, then

then the Authority of the Lamb will indeed cast the Balance with all the Followers of the Lamb. O for some Drops of the Rain of Heaven from him that has the seven Spirits of God in his Hand, to make all this Company to listen to the Commands and Authority of the worthy Lamb, and to follow the Lamb, by giving intire Subjection and Obedience unto him. Again, in the

4th Place, they follow the Lamb by an open Confession of him. Ye see it is said of the Followers of the Lamb, in the Beginning of this Chapter, that *they have his Name and his Father's Name written upon their Foreheads*. That imports that they are not ashamed to make an open Confession and Profession of the Lamb; they are not in the least ashamed openly to confess the worthy Lamb. All the Followers of the Lamb, they are Confessors of the Lamb; they ought to be so, it is a Duty plainly laid down in the Word, *Rom. x. 3, 10. If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine Heart that God has raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved: For with the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation*. All the Followers of the Lamb ought to be Confessors of the Lamb before a sinful and perverse Generation. They ought to confess themselves to be on the Lamb's Side, whatever it may cost them; and wherever the Lamb sets up his Standard, there ought they to fix their Station, and deserve the Character given them, *Isa. xliii. 10. Ye are my Witnesses, saith the Lord*. How ought the Followers of the Lamb to witness for him? Why, every one of them, in their several Spheres and Stations, ought to witness for him as he is pleased to give an Opportunity; and so, if, in a declining Day, a Testimony be listed up for the

the Honour and Truth of the Lamb, all his Followers ought to espouse that Testimony: And, Sirs, if the Testimony lifted up at this Day be a faithful Testimony for the declarative Glory of the Lamb, for the Truths of the Lamb, (as I make no Doubt but it is so) then all the Followers of the Lamb in *Scotland*, they ought to espouse that Testimony, to own that Testimony, whatever it may cost them.

What ever Difficulties may be in the Way, his Followers must be Confessors, and good Reason it should be so, good Reason they have to confess the Lamb, the worthy Lamb, if it is considered he made a good Confession for them before *Pontius Pilate*. No Opposition did hinder his Confession of them, and so, in like manner, in following the Lamb, he is to be confessed in the Face of Opposition, let the Opposition be never so great.

In the 5th Place, as the Followers of the Lamb do follow him by an open Confession of him, so they ought to follow the Lamb by a constant Cleaving to all the Lamb's Truths, to all his Ordinances and Institutions. The Lamb upon the Mount *Zion*, he hath given Ordinances to Mount *Zion*, positive Laws and Institutions to Mount *Zion*. The Institutions that the Lamb has given to Mount *Zion*, they respect the Doctrine of his House, the religious Worship of his House, the Discipline of his House, and the Government of his House; and what any Way concerns any of these, the Followers of the Lamb they ought all of them to cleave unto them, they ought to adhere unto them, and in so doing they own the Lamb to be the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, him who only has Right to prescribe Laws and Rules to Mount *Zion*; our Lord Jesus Christ, the great King of *Zion*, the King and Head of the Church,

Church, has not left the New Testament Church without her divine Institutions and Appointments, no more than the Old. He has laid down the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government of his Church in his Word; and all the Followers of the Lamb, they ought to follow him by a constant Cleaving unto all the Lamb's Institutions, and particularly, at this Day, the Followers of the Lamb ought to follow him by a faithful Adherence unto the Presbyterian Form of Church-Government, laid down in the Word of God. I shall not enlarge at present upon this Subject; only, with Reference to the Glory of the Lamb's Followers, with Respect unto Presbyterian Church-Government, there are two Things I would say.

1st. As our Lord Jesus Christ, the King and only Head of the Church, has committed the Keys of Government unto Office-Bearers, to act in Parity together, without a lordly Prelacy, whereby one ruleth over another; so it is the unquestionable Duty of all the Lamb's Followers, to witness against Prelatists, who maintain the contrary, in as far the Lord is pleased to open up this Truth to every one in their different Stations. I know those who are Favourers of the prelatick Scheme, will tell you, that Opinion of theirs is countenanced in the Word of God, particularly from the Practice of the Apostles, whom they say acted as prelatical Bishops, in a Degree superior to ordinary Pastors. We grant that the Apostles had an extraordinary Mission from Christ, and had no Relation to any particular Place or Charge, but had laid upon them the Care of all the Churches, in that infant State of the Church: But then it is to be considered, that that extraordinary Mission was peculiar to the Apostles themselves, and ceased with them: So that no Order of Church-

Church-Officers above Gospel-Ministers, to whom is committed the Power of Ordination and Government, to act and rule in Parity, as well as Warrant to dispense Word and Sacrament, is acknowledged in the Word of God. Again,

2dly. The Followers of the Lamb, in cleaving to the Government of the Lamb's House, they are to bear Witness with him, against Independents, and all Sectarians, who maintain that our Lord Christ hath committed the Keys of Government unto the Community of the Faithful, and so set up for a popular Government, which is to introduce a plain Confusion. In this Case it is incumbent on all the Lamb's Followers to witness with him, that the Keys of Government are committed to Office-Bearers, to such as are cloathed with official Power and Authority from the King and Head of the Church. This Truth we see clearly founded upon the Word of God, as in the 16th of *Matthew* and 16th Verse. There our Lord gives the Keys to *Peter*, in name of the whole Church-Officers, without any Word of the Community of the Faithful. *I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* We see also the Spirit of God plainly makes a Difference, in Scripture, between Rulers and Ruled: *Obeys them that have the Rule over you, &c.* It is most reasonable it should be so; for, if all were Rulers, who should be ruled? Thus we see, then, that the Keys of Government are committed to Ministers, to the Office-Bearers of the Lamb's House, who are to manage them, not in a lordly Way and Manner, ordering it over the Consciences of Men, but in a ministerial Way and Manner, so as they may thereby edify the Body of Christ, and may contend against

gainst every Error subversive of the Truths of Christ, and so as that every Truth of Christ may be vindicated and witnessed for; and all the Followers of the Lamb are, in their several Stations, to strengthen the Hands of Office-Bearers in a Way of vindicating the Discipline and Government of the Lamb's House. Thus, we say, the Followers of the Lamb are to follow him by a constant Cleaving to the Discipline and Government of the Lamb's House; and as to the Doctrine and Worship, and all the Ordinances of his House, they ought to cleave to them, to adhere to them. They are to cleave to all the Doctrines of his Word, to all the Truths that are contained in the Lamb's Word; and, in a special Manner, the Followers of the Lamb, they follow him by cleaving to and witnessing for what the Spirit of God calls the present Truth. There is a Word to this Purpose in the 2d Epistle of Peter, 1st Chapter and 12th Verse, where the Spirit of God saith, *Be established in the present Truth*. Now, what is that Truth called the present Truth? Why, Sirs, that Truth that becomes a controverted Truth, that is the present Truth, and that is the Truth, in a special Manner, which the Followers of the Lamb are called to cleave unto, to witness for and bear Testimony unto: Particularly, if the Truth concerning the Person of the Lamb, his being very God and very Man in one Person, be attacked, then a Testimony is to be given for that Truth by the Lamb's Followers: If the supreme Deity of the Lamb be attacked, then a Testimony ought to be given for it: If the declarative Glory of God, as the great and ultimate End of all the Followers of the Lamb, be attacked, then a Testimony ought to be given for it: If any Branch of the Government of Christ's House be attacked, then a Testimony is

to be given for it: If the Headship of the Lamb, his Sovereignty and Dominion over *Zion* the Hill of his Holiness, be attacked, (as it was by the late Act of Parliament anent Captain *John Porteous*) then a Testimony ought to be given for it: If the spiritual Privileges and Liberties of the Subjects of the Lamb's Kingdom are attacked, (as they are manifestly at this Day) then a Testimony ought to be given for them: If the ministerial Liberty, and Freedom of the Ministers of Christ, either with respect to the Doctrine or Discipline of the House of the God of Heaven, be attacked, then a Testimony is to be given for it: And so, by the By, we may see the Reasonableness and Necessity of the present Testimony on the Field, for these Truths, which have been so glaringly attacked by the present Judicatures of this national Church. There are, no doubt, some good Men and Ministers, who have got their Mission from Christ, who condemn our present Secession from the Judicatures of his Church, as a Thing quite needless: But, when the Truths and Institutions of the Lamb are so manifestly attacked as they have been, Is it not highly reasonable and necessary for all the Followers of the Lamb, to side themselves, and as openly to give a Testimony to these Truths and Institutions, as Adversaries have been open in impugning the same? I shall only say, if the Banner of a Testimony lifted up be against the Lamb, I have not seen that; but if it be for the Lamb, and his Truth and Cause, as I doubt not to affirm, then let all the Friends of the Lamb, who are for cleaving to the present Judicatures, notwithstanding of all the Height of Defection and Apostasy from God which they are arrived at, see to their Conduct in this Matter. As the judicial Testimony lifted up, is a free and faithful Testimony for the born-down Cause of the

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worthy Lamb, and against the open Attacks and Dishonours done to him, then I have no doubt to assemble you to that Banner ; and where the Lamb lifts up his Standard, all his Followers ought to gather together. Thus, we say, the Followers of the Lamb, they follow him by a constant Cleaving to all the Lamb's Truths, to all his Ordinances and Institutions, to the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government of the Lamb's House.

Again, in the 6th Place, How do they follow him ? They follow him by observing the Lamb's Footsteps and Paths, which he takes in the Dispensations of his Providence. Sirs, the Providence of God is frequently a Commentary upon the Word of God. The Word of God is the straight Rule and Line by which the Work of Providence is carried on, and will be carried on until the Work of Providence be finished. We ought, then, to observe the Operation of his Hand, in following the Lamb. The 107th *Psalms* is a Summary of many special Providences, and the Conclusion of it is an encouraging Promise to all such as follow the Lamb, by a steady Observation of the Lamb's Footsteps and Paths in the Dispensation of divine Providence: *Whofo is wise, and will observe these Things, even they shall understand the loving Kindness of the Lord.* Sirs, the Lamb is speaking loudly by his Providences at this Day, tho' we are deaf and do not hear. He hath not been silent in Scotland these Years by-past, as to the Voice of his Providence ; yet, alas ! this Voice seems to be little regarded. It is only the spiritually wise Man that will observe these Things. We need spiritual Wisdom to observe the Lamb's Tract and Path in the Dispensations of Providence. Many of you think little of the Lamb's Tract and Path with respect to the present

Testimony of the Day : But I make no Doubt to say, the Tract and Path of the Lamb is remarkable, in thrusting out some from the Judicatures of this national Church, and in putting this Testimony in their Hands. We know not what the Tract and Path of the Lamb is, in putting it in our Hands. O to be helped to follow the Tract and Path of the Lamb in this Dispensation of his Providence ! O to be helped to follow his providential Footsteps, according to the Line of his Word ? I shall not enlarge with respect to this particular Providence, in putting a Testimony in our Hands at this Day ; I shall only say, perhaps, in another Age and Generation, when the Vision will speak and be seen clearly, then the Lamb's Tract and Path will, as to this Particular, be more remarkably seen.

As the Followers of the Lamb do follow him by observing the Lamb's Footsteps, his Tract and Path, with respect to the Church, so they follow the Lamb's Tract and Path with respect to themselves. You who are Believers, the true Followers of the Lamb, you have Reason in every Station and Period of your Life, to remark the Providence of God towards you, to observe his Tract and Path toward you. It was a just Observe of one who was a great Observer of Providence, That those that remark Providence, remarkable Things in Providence will follow them in Agreeableness to the Word. Beware of a superstitious Regard to any of the Works of God ; but put the Works and Word of God together, and observe his Providences, so as to give Praise to the God of Providence.

But then, again, in the 7th and last Place, upon this Head, How do the Followers of the Lamb follow him ? They follow him by imitating and copying

copying after that Pattern and Example which the worthy Lamb casts before them in his Word, as we see he exhorts in the 11th Chapter of the Gospel according to *Matthew*, the 29th Verse, *Take my Yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart, and ye shall find Rest unto your Souls.* We are frequently called to this Duty, of making Christ the Lamb our Pattern, and copying after him, as in that 5th Chapter of the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, and 1st Verse, *Be ye, therefore, Followers of God, as dear Children.* Verse 2. *And walk in Love, as Christ also hath loved us, &c.* And again, *Philip. ii. 5. Let this Mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*

So much for the 4th general Head proposed. I proceed now

To the 5th Thing in the Method, which was, to shew where it is they follow the Lamb. It is expressed, in our Text, by a *Following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*; and truly, Sirs, they follow him through good Report and bad Report; they follow the Lamb in all Cases whatsoever; they follow the Lamb, not only in a sunny Day, but they follow the Lamb in a stormy Day; they follow the Lamb, not only in a Day of Prosperity, but they follow the Lamb in a Day of Adversity. But, more particularly, there are three Places I shall touch at, where the Followers of the Lamb do follow him. 1st. When he makes Darknes his secret Place; 2dly. When he goes without the Camp; and, 3dly. When he goes to Mount *Calvary* to a suffering Lot.

First, I say, the Followers of the Lamb, they follow him when he makes Darknes his secret Place, when his Pavillion round about him is dark Waters and thick Clouds of the Skies; as in the 18th *Psalme* and 11th Verse; when he wraps up himself

in a Cloud, covers himself with a Cloud, that their Prayers should not pass through, as in the 3d of the Lamentations, 44th Verse. Well, if you ask, How do the Followers of the Lamb follow him there, when he sees meet to wrap up himself in a Cloud, and makes Darkness his secret Place? I answer, in the

1st Place, They follow him, in such a Case, by lamenting after him. When he goes out of Sight, when he covers himself with a Cloud, then they lament after him. Thus, you see, when the Ark of God abode twenty Years in *Kirjath-jearim*, all the House of *Israel* lamented after the Lord, 1 Sam. vii. 2. Then, when the Lord was provoked by *Israel's* Sin, to keep the Ark in a private and obscure Place, and that near the *Philistines*, where many of the *Israelites* neither durst nor could come to it, as when it was in *Shiloh*, What then was the Exercise of the true *Israelites*? Why, they lamented after the Lord. Indeed the Majesty of the Lord is provoked, and sees meet to cover himself with a Cloud from all the reformed Churches at this Day. No Wonder it be so, for our Iniquities have procured it. But what should we be doing? Why, it becomes us, in this Case, to lament after the Lord, to lament over the Grounds of the Quarrel and Controversy. Again, in the

2d Place, How do the Followers of the Lamb follow him, when he wraps up himself in a Cloud, and makes Darkness his secret Place? Why, then, and in such a Case, not only do they follow him there, by lamenting after him, but also by waiting for him, waiting upon him. We see this expressed by the Prophet *Isaiah* in a like Case, *Isa.* viii. 17. In some preceeding Verses the Lord threatens, that many of *Israel* and *Judah* shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and taken. Why, then the

the Prophet in Name of the Church, saith, *I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his Face from the House of Jacob; and I will look for him.* Tho' he be a hiding God, yet his true Followers will wait upon him, and look for him. O then, Sirs, tho' at this Day he is a hiding God, wait upon him in the Duty of secret Prayer, wait upon him in the Ordinances of his Institution, wait upon him in every Duty. Again, in the

3^d Place, They follow the Lamb when he wraps up himself in a Cloud, and makes Darknes his secret Place, by earnest Wrestlings and Expostulations with him, for his returning and manifesting himself. They cry unto him with such a Cry as this, *Return, return, for thy Servants Sake, the Tribes of thine Inheritance.* They expostulate with him by such a Cry as this, *O the Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in Time of Trouble, Why shouldest thou be as a Stranger in the Land, and as a way-faring Man that turneth aside to tarry for a Night?* Thus Faith it sees, that tho' he be making Darknes his secret Place, yet he gives a Visit now and then to his People, but they were very short, it was but like the Visit of a Stranger, that stays but for a Night; and the Followers of the Lamb they want him to abide with them. It is Ground of Praise, that altho' the Lamb be making Darknes his secret Place at this Day, yet I hope he gives his People now and then a Visit: But. O what a general Restraint is there of the holy Spirit at this Day? Well, what shall the Followers of the Lamb do in such a Case? Why, the best Way is, just to fall in with the Exhortation the Spirit of God gives, *Isa. lxii. 7. Give him no Rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a Praise in the whole Earth.* Again, in the

4th Place, How do the Followers of the Lamb follow him, when he wraps up himself in a Cloud, and makes Darkness his secret Place? They follow him, in such a Case, just by trusting him, that he will manifest himself. This was *Job's* Exercise, when the Lamb's Way was very dark to him: *Tho' he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* And we see such as are walking in Darkness, through the Lamb's wrapping himself up in a Cloud, are exhorted to this Exercise, *Isa. 1. 10. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the Voice of his Servant, that walketh in Darkness, and hath no Light? Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.* Take the Exhortation, then, and, when he makes Darkness his secret Place, follow him in the Trust and Expectation of Faith that he will return, that he yet will manifest himself, that he will come back; *For the Expectation of the Poor shall not always be forgotten; it shall not perish for ever.*

2^{dly}. Not only do the Followers of the Lamb, follow him when he wraps up himself in a Cloud, when he makes Darkness his secret Place, but they follow him when he goes without the Camp. If the Lamb sees meet to go without the Camp, there they follow him. Ye have a Word to this Purpose in the 13th Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, 12th and 13th Verses, *Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the People with his Blood, suffered without the Gate.* What then is the Practice of his Followers in such a Case as this? We have it in the 13th Verse, *Let us go forth, therefore, unto him without the Camp, bearing his Reproach.* What is that, *without the Camp?* Without the Jewish Church, and all the Privileges that they enjoyed; from *Judaism*, and all its Parts abolished; and

and all erroneous Doctrines, however numerous and agreeable to Fancy. This lets us see our Duty, when the Lord Christ, the worthy Lamb, is pleased to lift up the Standard of a Testimony without the Camp, without the present legal established Church. *Let us go forth, therefore, unto him without the Camp, bearing his Reproach.* The Words plainly insinuate, that the Reproach of Christ, and going forth unto him without the Camp, go together: But, even allowing it be so, let us go forth unto him without the Camp, bearing the Reproach of Christ; the Reproach of the Lamb must be born by the Followers of the Lamb: Let us go forth unto him, bearing Reproach for him, Reproach for the Cause of Christ, Reproach for the Testimony of Christ, Reproach for the Name of Christ: Let us go forth unto him without the Camp, bearing his Reproach. The plain Intendment of the Words is, that we ought to abandon all Church-Privileges, from a Church, tho' legally established, when she is become tyrannical in her Government, and erroneous in her Doctrine, which is the Case with the Church of Scotland, as represented by the present Judicatures, as has been elsewhere proven at some Length: And when, in Providence, the Standard of a judicial Testimony is lifted up for Christ, his Cause and Truth, without the Camp of the present Establishment, What should be the Language among all the true Followers of the Lamb, but just this, *Let us go forth, therefore, unto him without the Camp, bearing his Reproach?* But again, in the

3d and last Place upon this Head, the Followers of the Lamb, they follow him when he goes to Mount Calvary to a suffering Lot. Not only was the Lamb a Sufferer on Mount Calvary in the Days

Days of the Flesh, but he is a Sufferer to this very Day in his Members ; and so they follow him in a Way of suffering for him, if he calls them to it. They who follow the Lamb, through his Grace, will not decline suffering for him at his Call ; they will venture upon it, and prefer it unto the Profits and Pleasures of the World, at the Call of the Lamb. You have a remarkable Instance of this in the Case of *Moses*, in the 11th Chapter of the *Hebrews*, 24th, 25th, and 26th Verses, *By Faith Moses, when he was come to Years, refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter, chusing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season ; esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures in Egypt.* *Moses* was brought up in the Court of a grand Pharaoh, and no doubt was trained up in all the Grandeur of that Court ; but, so soon as *Moses* grew up, and understood his Relation to the persecuted and afflicted People of God, why, then he abandons that Court, tho' then the greatest in the World : And why so ? Just because he esteemed the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures in *Egypt*. I might shew that this has been the Practice of the Lamb's Followers in all Ages : But I now pass this Head, and come to the

6th and last Thing on the doctrinal Part, which was to give the Reasons of the Doctrine, or shew why all those who are with the Lamb, do follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

In the 1st Place, then, Why do all those who are with the Lamb, follow the Lamb, &c. They follow him, because he is excellent and glorious, his glorious Excellency is the primary Cause of all that religious Worship, Homage and Obedience that is

due to him, and that is ascribed to him by all his Followers. This his Excellency and Glory is proclaimed by the seraphick Tribe, in the 5th Chapter of the *Revelation*, and there the 12th Verse, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing.* Why, is all this ascribed unto him? Just because he is worthy to receive it. How is it he is worthy to receive all this? Why, because he is infinitely excellent and glorious: He is the Brightness of the Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and upholdeth all Things by the Word of his Power. He is the supreme God, God over all blessed for ever. He is the true God, and eternal Life; and for all this the Followers of the Lamb count him worthy of Obedience, that he should be followed whithersoever he goeth. But again, in the

2d Place, They follow the Lamb, and that upon the Account of what the Lamb has done for them. Tho' this is not the primary Foundation of their Worshipping and honouring him, and paying this Homage unto him, namely, of following him, yet it is a secondary Reason of it; because he hath redeemed all the ransomed Company, they follow him; they throw down their Crowns at his Feet, and cry, as *Rev. v. 9. Thou art worthy*——
for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred and Tongue, and People, and Nation. He has done much for them, done all for them, and therefore they follow him whithersoever he goeth. Again, in the

3d and last Place, Why do they follow the Lamb? They follow the Lamb, because of the new Nature given to them in Regeneration: This new Nature given them by the Lamb, it leads them

to this Work of following the Lamb, just as every Thing points towards its Centre. The new Nature it just breathes naturally after the Lamb: Whatever Remains of Corruption be in the best, yet, with Reference unto the renewed Part, it may be said, that there is a Going out after the glorious, worthy and matchless Lamb. Wherever the new Nature is implanted, that Soul goes out after the Lamb, follows the Lamb upon the Wings of Faith and Love, mounts upward after him upon the Wings of Faith and Love, tho' many Times born down and retarded in its Motion with a Weight of Unbelief, a Weight of the Body of Sin and Death: But it is remarkable, as to the Followers of the Lamb, when they are disturbed in their Course of following him, by the Weights of Unbelief and the Body of Sin and Death, then it cries out under the Oppression; it cries out, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death; from this Clog and the other Clog, that hinders my Motion in following the Lamb; from the Atheism of my Heart, from the Unbelief of my Heart, from the Carnality of my Heart! Fain would I mount up Heaven-ward after the Lamb, but am born down with these dead Weights! Fain would I be near the worthy Lamb! O set me as a Seal upon thine Heart, as a Seal upon thine Arm, for Love is strong as Death! &c.*

I shall not farther insist upon the doctrinal Part: I come now to make some Application of the Doctrine; and all the Use I design, is, to address myself to three or four Sorts of Persons, in a Word of Exhortation to them severally; and may the Lord himself carry home the Word spoken to their several Hearts!

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In the 1st Place, then, if it is so, that those who are with the Lamb, do follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, let me address you that profess to be on the Lamb's Side, who profess to be the Followers of the worthy Lamb, and in this Class I take in all the Communicants that have been in this Place upon this Occasion, and of such there has been a great Number. Now, to such there are two or three Things I would offer to your Consideration.

In the *first* Place, let me exhort you to examine your Profession; ye ought to examine yourselves after a Communion, as well as before it; examine whether your Heart and Profession do agree together or not. If they do not agree together, your Profession is but a hypocritical Profession; you will remember one of the Characters I took notice of, which is given to the Lamb's Followers in the Context, is, *That in their Mouth was found no Guile*; that is, their Heart and Profession agree together; If it be not so with you, ye are but hypocritical Professors; if your Heart and Profession any Way correspond, then your Heart has been made to bow to the worthy Lamb, to stoop to the worthy Lamb. Examine your Profession, whether it be a dead or lively Profession, whether you be dead or alive. The most Part of the Members of the Church of *Sardis*, they had a Name to live, and were dead; I am afraid many at this Day have a Name to live, and are dead. They may have some Strictness in their Way, and yet dead, yet want a lively Faith in the Lamb; but as, even in *Sardis*, the Lamb had a few Names which had not defiled their Garments, so at this Day he hath yet a few Names, a few who are alive; try if ye be amongst them. Again, examine whether ye are in the Faith or not, whether Christ be in you the Hope of Glory, or not; and

and whether you are in him, or not : If you are not in Christ, and Christ in you, it is but a hypocritical Profession which you are making, and, if Mercy prevent not, your Profession will land in Apostasy from Christ and his Cause, and ye will be a Dishonour and Scandal to that Profession you now make.

In the 2^d Place, I would exhort you, who profess to be the Followers of the Lamb, to be rooted in the Lamb, to know the Lamb. O be concerned to know the worthy Lamb in a saving Manner ! Study to have saving Acquaintance with him ! This, I told you, is included in following of him. Study to know him, not only by the Hearing of the Ear, but with the Seeing with the Eye of Faith, with the Believing of the Heart. Ye have all heard by the Hearing of the Ear : the outward Report of Christ hath brought many to the Profession of Christ that have never seen Christ, never believed in Christ, and therefore I would exhort you to seek to see him, not with the natural Eye, not with the Eye that is called natural Reason, but with Faith, which is the Evidence of Things not seen, and the Substance of Things hoped for. It is said of *Moses*, Heb. xi. 27. *He endured as seeing him who is invisible.* He got a Sight of an invisible God ; he saw him with the Eye of Faith, and that made *Moses* endure all Hardships. And, Sirs, we may tell you, whatever your Profession is for the present, if you get not a Sight of the Lamb by Faith, ye cannot endure Hardships, Trials and Sufferings for the Lamb and his Cause : It is only those who have seen with the Eye of Faith can endure. *He endured, as seeing him who is invisible.* O examine whether you have seen him in Truth, and in Reality,

lity, or not! O be concerned to get the saving Knowledge of him, whom to know is eternal Life! Again,

In the 3^d Place, I would exhort you, who profess to be the Followers of the Lamb, to be well acquainted with his Cause and Truths. This is needful at all Times, and especially in such a Day as this, when shaking and withering Winds are blowing. Winds of Infidelity and Error are blowing. Winds of Neutrality and Indifferency are blowing. O, then, be concerned to be rooted in the Lamb, and well acquainted with Christ and the Truths of Christ, that ye may bring forth Fruits unto God, that ye may have the Communication of Spiritual Life from this Root. Christ, the worthy Lamb, is the Root, and only Spring, in which all his Followers are ingrafted; they are just all rooted in him, as the Branch in the Vine: All their Sap comes from him, so that, if you are not rooted in him, you will be sapless, withered, and barren Professors. Be well established in the Truths of Christ, and particularly in the present Truth. As I have exhorted you on other Occasions of this Nature, so I again exhort you, to read your Bible often, and, next to the Bible, your Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and remember it is not an easy Reading I am advising you to, but read with Deliberation and Consideration; and if you would be established in the Truth of what you read, and not soon shaken in your Minds, then look for the Spirit of Truth to lead and guide you into all Truth, and to settle you in every Truth of God laid down in his Word.

In the 4th and last Place, let me exhort you, who are the professed Followers of the Lamb, to lay your Account with this, that your Profession may be tried: You have been long warned of Trials a-
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coming. The Lord has exercised long-suffering Patience toward us, yet we have not returned to him with all our Heart, and it is like we will be tried. There are two Things in the Circumstances of the Day that threaten: An Inundation of Popery may be our Trial. *First*, There is the close Conjunction of Popish Powers abroad; it hath been rarely seen but their secular Interests have clashed together, whereas, at this Day, there is a close Conjunction, without Clashing of their secular Interests. *Secondly*, There is an universal Formality, Backsliding and Declining, not only of one particular Church, or of some Churches, but of all the Protestant Churches abroad and at home. Now, these two Things, put together, have an awful Aspect. If we take a View of our particular Case in *Scotland* at this Day, Have we not Reason to fear we will be tried and punished, as a Nation which has departed from the Lord? Many Warnings have we got, Yet what Stupidity under them all takes Place with the great Bulk? Lay your Account, Professors, to have your Profession tried; you may have it thoroughly tried ere all be done. O take heed lest ye be unstable and fickle in your Profession! I fear there are many Professors like *Reuben*, unstable as Water, which cannot prevail: We ought to warn such, that they may meet with shaking Providences to try their Profession. It may come to the Time, when some will say, *Lo, here is Christ!* and others, *lo, he is there!* I know not what Shakings and Splittings there may be in *Scotland* ere all be done; but I would fain hope the Lord will keep the little Handful he hath brought together to own a Testimony for Christ; that he will keep them together in shaking Days, when some are left to go to great Extreame, some on the Right-Hand, and some on the Left. O be concerned to be established, that you may
not

not be soon shaken in your Minds, that ye may be well fortified against trying Times ! As ye have professed to receive Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the Faith ; walk in him as the Lord your Righteousness and Strength ; the Glory of your Strength doth only stand in him, all your Springs are in him. But, not to insist,

There is a *second* Sort of Persons I would address myself unto, and that is, not only Professors, but such as are really with the Lamb, and do follow the Lamb, and of such I hope there are a goodly Remnant here. From what I have said you may know their Character : And try it, Sirs ; Are you among the Lamb's Retinue and Train ? They who are, they have been quickned by his Spirit, they know what it is to give Obedience to the Lamb, they know what it is to have Correspondence with the Lamb, they know what it is, in some Measure, to be ingrafted in the Lamb. All the Followers of the Lamb, they desire just to be eternal Debtors to the Lamb, they just roll themselves over upon his Righteousness for their Justification, and upon his Strength for their Sanctification ; the Lamb is their Light, the Lamb is their Life, the Lamb is their Leader, the Lamb is their Glory, the Lamb is their Hope, the Lamb is their All, they cannot live without the Lamb. Well, Sirs, if you be amongst the Lamb's Followers, amongst his Retinue and Train, there are a few Words I would suggest unto you.

First, O keep your Eye upon the worthy Lamb, your glorious Leader, the Captain of your Salvation, who is made perfect through Sufferings ! Ye are directed to look unto him, *Heb. xii. 1. 2.*
Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed with so great
a Cloud

a Cloud of Witnesses, let us lay aside every Weight, and the Sin which doth so easily beset us; let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisber of our Faith. O, then, keep your Eye upon him; if you lose Sight of him, then you will lose your Way: Look to the glorious Leader, be concerned to keep within Sight of him; look to him just in his Word, and keep Sight of him as he manifests himself in his Word, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisber of Faith. Look to him as your Leader, for Conduct; look to him as your Commander and General, for Strength, that ye may be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might; mind that all your Strength is in your Leader and Captain; he hath a glorious Magazine in him, all Furniture of Grace in him, Mercy and Grace to help in Time of Need. There is an inexhaustible Treasure of Grace in him, all the Fulness of the Godhead dwells in him. O the glorious Furniture that is in our Captain-General, for the Supply of all his Followers, his Retinue and Train! Look to that inexhaustible Treasure of Grace that is in him for the Supplying all your Wants, for it is just in him for the Behoof and Benefit of his Followers, just in him to be communicated and given forth to all his Followers. But then,

In the 2^d Place, Are you among the Followers of the Lamb, his Retinue and Train? Then let me advise you not only to keep your Eye upon your Leader, but also to encourage yourselves in your worthy Leader, in the worthy Lamb, the glorious Leader, in all the Discouragements and Trials that may cast up in your Way. The Lamb's Followers frequently see Temptations cast up that they were not expecting; and it may be, Sirs, when you go home to your Houses, you may

meet with Trials you did not expect, some Loss or another, some Cross or another, some Disappointment or another, may cast up, which you did not expect: But then, let me exhort the Followers of the Lamb, to encourage themselves in the Lamb, under all that casts up. Ye who are the Children of Zion have good Reason to encourage yourselves in your King, the glorious and worthy Lamb, to glory in your King whatever befall you. Consider, whatever you meet with, it is all measured out by your King and Leader in infinite Wisdom: There is not one Grain Weight of a Cross laid upon you, but what is measured out for you by his own Hand, and he sees it meet for you, needful for you: Yea, Sirs, all your Trials are measured out by infinite Wisdom and infinite Love, and therefore you may be assured all is designed for your Good; there is Good designed in all the hard and trying Providences you meet with; and it will ay be true, *All Things work together for Good to them that love God, to them that are the Called according to his Purpose.* Therefore encourage yourselves in the Lamb, under all your Discouragements outward or inward, and particularly in View of a publick Storm, a general Storm, which is so awfully threatned, and we know not how soon it may blow; yet let the Followers of the Lamb encourage themselves in him. Sirs, you who are the Followers of the worthy Lamb, his Retinue and Train, I would read you a Word that may be Food to your Faith when you go home, yea as long as you live, and ye know not but you may need it very soon in an especial Manner. It is in the 43^d Chapter of the Prophecies of *Isaiah*, 1st, 2^d, and 3^d Verses, *But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel; Fear not; for I have redeemed*

redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy Name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the Flame kindle upon thee: For I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy Saviour. May not this Word of Grace be Food to your Faith while you are in the Wilderness? Even tho' a Hurricane of common Calamities should come upon these Lands, yea, even tho' you should die in the common Calamity, there is enough here to carry you through all, I will be with thee.

But then, again, in the 3^d Place, Are you among the Followers of the Lamb? Then let me exhort you to be concerned that the Lamb may be honoured and glorified in our Land yet, that the Horn of the Lamb may bud forth pleasantly yet. The Lamb is represented, in Scripture, as having seven Horns: It is a figurative Expression, pointing out, that he hath all Power, Glory and Excellency. Seven, in Scripture, is reckoned a compleat Number; and so the seven Horns of the Lamb, points out the Perfection of the Lamb's Power, Glory and Excellency: O, then, plead that the Lamb's Horn may bud, his Power, Glory and Excellency may be yet seen by all Ranks. That you may be encouraged in your Pleading, there is a Promise it shall be so, in that 132 Psalm, and 17th Verse, *There will I make the Horn of David to bud: I have ordained a Lamp for mine Anointed. There will I make the Horn of David to bud.* If you ask, Where? I answer, In the New Testament Church; for this is a Promise that respects the New Testament Church, and so his Horn it buds forth in the Conversion of Sinners to himself, in a Kingdom,

dom, and in a Land. His Horn buds forth, when he appears upon his Mount Zion, and makes himself known in accomplishing such a Promise as this. O pray it may be made out more and more! Pray his Horn may bud forth, that his Glory may be seen yet in our Land and Church. Sirs, his Glory is much veiled at this Day, veiled by Professors, by the untender Lives of Professors; veiled by the Walk, Talk and Conversation of Professors. Pray that the Lamb's Horn may bud forth in the Walk of Professors; when they glorify him in their Walk and Deportment, then his Horn buds forth. O pray that his Horn may bud forth yet in Scotland! That it may bud forth yet in this covenanted Land! A Land which the Lamb hath special Interest in, by the special Gift of his Father, and by a voluntary Surrender of themselves unto him. O pray that his Horn may bud forth in Scotland! Sometimes his Steps of Majesty have been seen in Scotland, in a Work both of the Conversion of Sinners and Confirmation of Saints. O pray that his Name may be yet great in Scotland! O cry him back to this Land, to Scotland! O plead for his Return! O that we were exciting and stirring up one another to take hold of him! This is his Complaint, that there is none that calleth upon his Name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of him. It becomes us to use the Means of stirring up ourselves, and of stirring up one another to call upon his Name, and to take hold of him. To us his Voice is, *Ye that make Mention of the Lord, keep not silent; give him no Rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a Praise in the whole Earth.* And we exhort you to cry, *Give him no Rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a Praise in the whole Earth.* O cry that

he may come back to his Mount Zion in Scotland, where he has had his Dwelling in Times past !

In the 4th and last Place, let me exhort you, who are the Followers of the Lamb, to follow him fully, *follow him whithersoever he goeth*, as in our Text. You know it is a Commendation given to Caleb and Joshua, that they followed the Lord fully. Now, to follow the Lord fully, is, 1st. to follow all the Orders and Institutions of the Lamb, as you have heard in the former Part of this Discourse ; it is to follow all the Truths of the Lamb, to value and esteem every Truth of the Lamb great ; their is no Truth little : It is true, some Truths are of greater Importance and Moment than others ; but so far is any Truth from being small, that every Point of divine Truth is of greater Moment than Heaven and Earth, of more Value than the whole Creation. Every Point of divine Truth is of more Value than Angels and Men put together. O Sirs, beware of thinking any Truth little ! No Truth is little, no Truth is small ; not one Hoof of divine Truth is to be parted with by the Followers of the Lamb.

2^{dly}. To follow him fully, is just to live upon the Lamb. The Lamb is Food to all his Followers, the Lamb is Clothing to all his Followers, the Lamb is just every Thing to all his Followers, that they want and need, for Time and Eternity. The Lamb that is in the Midst of the Throne will lead them to living Fountains of Water ; and the Time is coming, Sirs, when the Lamb, with his own Hand, will wipe away all Tears from your Eyes. O, then, let the Followers of the Lamb, who have it for their Concern to follow him fully, constantly, and whithersoever he goeth, rejoice and be glad that that Day is a coming, that there will be
an

an End of the War which they have now with the Lamb's and their Enemies. The Conflict is but short, and the Victory is sure, it shall come in a little. But, as I am afraid I have insisted too long already, I shall just close with a short Word to the two last Sorts of Persons I had a View to speak to. Is it so, then, as has been said? Then, from this Text and Doctrine, I might speak a Word, by Way of Advice, to such of the Followers of the worthy Lamb, as for present may be labouring under Doubts and Fears lest they be not on the Lamb's Side. To such I shall say only a Word or two.

In the *first* Place, I would exhort and advise you to mint at a direct Act of Faith on the worthy Lamb. That is a remarkable Word which I cited already in 50th Chapter of *Isaiah*, and 10th Verse, to such as are in a dark Case and under Doubts, *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the Voice of his Servant, that walketh in Darkeness, and hath no Light? Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.* The best Way to get Relief from thy Doubts and Fears, is just to mint at acting Faith upon the Promise of God, where it is promised that you shall do it, as in that 48th Chapter of *Isaiah*, and 24th Verse, *Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength.* The best Way to get quite of thy Doubts and Fears, is just to roll them all over upon the Lord. *Cast thy Burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee; cast all thy Doubts and Fears over upon him, cast all thy Burdens on him, and act Faith on him that he will sustain thee.*

I shall only say to you, *2dly.* Are you under Doubts and Fears that you are none of the Lamb's Followers, his Retinue and Train? Then, O wait upon him! Wait upon a promising God in Christ!

Wait

Wait upon him in the Use of the Means of his own Appointment! *Wait upon the Lord, be of good Courage, and he shall strengthen thine Heart: wait, I say, upon the Lord.*

In the 4th and last Place, I thought to have dropt a Word to all this Assembly, by Way of Exhortation, a Word including all that hear me this Day. And, in a Word, that I may conclude, I would exhort you all, and every one of you, whoever you are, and whatever you are, or have been, to come and follow the Lamb, the worthy Lamb. O come! I call you in his Name to come and follow the worthy Lamb. O come, come! There are a vast Number gathered together here, and I am afraid a great many Strangers to Christ, the worthy Lamb. O Sirs, ye come to Sacraments, ye come to a Communion-Table, ye come to Sermons, but ye never come to Christ, the Lamb of God! O Sirs, we tell you, the Lamb this Day invites you to come to him, to come and follow him! This Day you are called and invited in the Word of the Gospel, *Whosoever will, let him come, and take the Water of Life freely.* What shall I say? Does the Lamb invite you, and will you not come? O will you not come upon his Invitation and Call! What should hinder your Compliance with the Lamb's Call? What tho' you have been bearing Arms against him all your Days to this very Moment, yet, I say unto you, there is Room in the Lamb for you, Room in the Grace of the Lamb for you, Room in the Heart of the Lamb for you, and you are by the Lamb invited this Day to come in. Are you a poor graceless Sinner? Why, then, I tell you, there is Room in his Grace for you, there are inexhaustible Treasures of Grace in him, and these inexhaustible Treasures of
Grace

Grace are just for them that have rebelled and carried Arms against the Lamb. O that ye knew and would be persuaded, that the Lamb hath received Gifts for Men, for such as did rebel, that the Lord God might dwell among them. O, then, be assured the inexhaustible Treasure of Grace that is in the Lamb, is just for you. There is Room in his Grace for you; Treasures of pardoning Mercy and sanctifying Grace are in him for you. O come, then, at his Call! Open your Hearts to receive him at his Call! Give Obedience to the Lamb, stoop to the Righteousness of the worthy Lamb; be assured there is Room in the Righteousness of the Lamb for you. Room in the Obedience and Death of the Lamb for you; whatever thy Guilt is, his Merit is infinite, and in it there is Room for you. O come, then, in under the Shadow of this perfect Righteousness, this Merit and Mediation of the worthy Lamb, with thy guilty Soul; and then, *Tho' ye have lien among the Pots, yet shall ye be as the Wings of a Dove, covered with Silver, and her Feathers with yellow Gold.* O come, guilty Sinner! O come, filthy Sinner! There is Room in this worthy Lamb for thee. Ye were called yesterday to come under the Lamb's Shadow, and we call you again this Day to come under his Shadow. O, it is a broad Shadow, it is a pleasant Shadow, is a delightful Shadow. O come under the Shadow of the worthy Lamb! O will you part from this Place, and from one another, without coming to the Lord Jesus Christ, the worthy Lamb. O, our Hearts Desire for you all is, that you may come to the worthy Lamb, that ye may know the worthy Lamb, that you may share of that Grace that is in Christ Jesus the worthy Lamb, and we are sure there is enough in him for

for you all, whatever you are or have been. O come to him ! Whatever be thy Case, we assure you here is something to suit it. Are you full of Wants ? You will find in him a Supply of all your Wants. Are you an hungred ? Food is to be found in him. Are thou thirsty ? Drink is to be found in him. Are you naked ? Clothing is to be found in him. Are you poor ? Unsearchable Riches are to be found in him. Are you blind ? Eye-Salve is to be found in him. *I counsel thee, saith the Lamb, to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white Raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the Shame of thy Nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine Eyes with Eye-Salve, that thou mayest see,* Rev. iii. 18. O to be found in the Lamb ! O, are you a poor diseased Sinner ? Why, then, we tell you, Medicine is to be found in him for all your Plagues and Maladies, whatever they are ; his Name is *Jehovah Rophi*, the Lord that healeth thee. Are you an Unbeliever, and cannot trust his Word ? The Spirit of Faith is in him. Are you dumb, and cannot seek any Thing from him, lame and cannot come to him ? Why, *he maketh the lame Man to leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb to sing.* Have you an obstinate, stubborn and rebellious Heart ? He hath omnipotent Power to overcome all the Obstinacy in thy Heart. O, then, come, come to the worthy Lamb, and follow the worthy Lamb whithersoever he goeth ! O that the Spirit of God may be sent forth into thy Heart ! O that he may be sent forth as a Spirit of Faith, as a Spirit of Love ! O that he may be sent to take the Face of Covering from every one in all this Company, and manifest the Glory of the worthy Lamb unto us all !

The Lord bless his Word.

F I N I S.

7 AP 55

The Father's Promise to the
Son, a clear Bow in the
Church's darkest Cloud ;

O R,

The spiritual Seed of Christ
preserved in all Ages and a-
midst all Dangers.

Being the Substance of several

SERMONS

Preached at *Perth*, in the Years 1729.
and 1730.

By the late REVEREND and LEARNED Mr. WILLIAM
WILSON *Minister of the Gospel at* PERTH.

2 Sam. iii. 38. *There is ——— a great Man fallen in
Israel.*

Heb. xi. 14. *He being dead yet speaketh.*

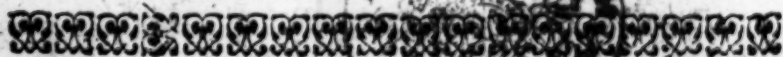
E D I N B U R G H,

Printed for *David Duncan*, and sold at his House,
opposite to the *Weigh-House*, North-Side of the
Street. MCGDXLVII.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Discourses were lately found in the Author's Closet in Manuscript, corrected with his own Hand; an incontestible Evidence that he designed the Publication of the same. So we judge it our Duty to do him the Justice, and the World the Service of presenting them with this Part of his Works, whose Fame is in the Church; and since a few Sermons are all that Part of this Author's Works the World can be favoured with, it is therefore expected that well-disposed People will be careful to peruse, and recommend the Perusal of the same where they can have Influence, which, thro' the Lord's Blessing, will terminate in their Profit.



(3)
PSALM LXXXIX. 29.

His Seed also will I make to endure for ever.

THIS excellent *Pfalm* was penned by *Ethan* the *Ezrahite*, as the Inscription bears ; it is probable he is the same *Ethan* who was famous in the Days of *Solomon* for Wisdom, together with his Brethren *Heman*, *Chalchol* and *Darda* the Sons of *Macho*, 1 *Kings* iv. 31. It is remarkable, that, in the preceeding *Pfalm*, his Brother *Heman* is under much of a Spirit of Bondage ; he cries out, that his Soul is full of Troubles, that the Wrath of the Lord lieth hard upon him, that he is in Darkness and in the Deeps, and that he is ready to die from his Youth, and distracted with the Terrors of the Lord : But in this *Pfalm* *Ethan* sings of the Mercy and Faithfulness of God. O what adorable Sovereignty is here ! Some of the Saints and People of God walk, for the most Part of their Time, in Darkness and under much Heaviness and Bondage, while others enjoy a more pleasant Sun-Shine of spiritual Light, Joy and Comfort : So it is with *Ethan* in this *Pfalm* ; tho' in the Close of it he bewails the Calamity and Distress that the Church and People of God, in his Day, were brought under, yet he is comforted and encouraged, and his Faith is strengthened and confirmed, from the spiritual Discoveries that are given him of that rare Superstructure of Mercy on the Behalf of miserable Sinners, and

and also of the solemn Engagement of divine Faithfulness for the Preservation of Christ's spiritual Seed, according to the Covenant-Transaction with the Lord Jesus, of whom *David* was an eminent Type ; and therefore, from the Beginning to the 15th Verse of the *Psalms*, he celebrates, with a Song of Praise, the Mercy and Faithfulness, the Sovereignty, Greatness and Power of God manifested in all his Dispensations towards his Church and People. And, from the 15th to the 19th Verse, we have some of the special Characters, with the peculiar Blessings of all such who are Christ's spiritual Seed, and Heirs of the Promise ; from the 19th Verse and downward, the new Covenant-Transaction is farther laid open in some Account of the wonderful Person who has the first Room and Place in this excellent Bargain, and who bears all the Weight and Burden of the whole Building of Mercy ; as also of his Furniture for his Work, and his glorious Success in it : Who is he then on whom the Help of self-destroying *Israel* is laid ? He is *David Jehovah's* Servant, 20th Verse. Surely a greater than *David* the King of *Judah* and *Israel* is here, for he is one that is mighty, 19th Verse. He is indeed the mighty God, the everlasting Father, who is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through him ; he is also one chosen out of the People, he is God in our Nature, or *Immanuel*, God with us. This is he with whom the Covenant of Grace stands fast, 28th Verse. He is designed the First-born, 27th Verse. *I will make him my First-born.* And so, *Rom. viii. 29.* he is called the First-born among many Brethren ; and, *Col. i. 15, 18.* *The First-born of every Creature, and the First-born from the Dead, that in all Things he might have the Pre-eminence.*

eminence. The Right of the First-born is in the Person of the Lord Jesus the second *Adam*; he is the Head of the new Covenant, the glorious Heir of all Things, and unto him all the Promises of Grace and Glory are given in the first Instance, and in him they are made sure unto all his spiritual Seed. With respect unto his Furniture for his Work he was anointed with the Oyl of Holiness, that is, with the holy Spirit in a super-abundant Measure, whereby he was furnished and strengthened for the Discharge of the great Work and Trust committed unto him in the 20th and 21st Verses. And as for his Success in his Work, he hath trampled under Foot the strong Powers of Darknes, Sin and *Satan*, the World, Death, Hell and the Grave, 22d and 23d Verses. And being now exalted into the Throne of his Glory, he stretcheth out his omnipotent Arm in the Dispensation of the Word of the Gospel, the Rod of his Strength, by which he makes a Conquest of Grace in the Islands of the Sea, and also in the Continent amongst the Rivers, 25th Verse. And unto him it is promised, in the Words of our Text, that his Seed shall endure for ever, that is, he shall have a spiritual Seed and Offspring upon this Earth as long as the Sun and Moon do endure. *His Seed I will make to endure.* Whatever Opposition may be made by Men or Devils unto Christ's Cause and People, yet that Day shall never dawn wherein it can be said that Christ's spiritual Seed do altogether fail; nay, in all Ages and Generations he shall have a Seed to do him Service, a People to honour him, and Subjects to yield Obedience unto him, for his Throne shall be as the Days of Heaven. The doctrinal Proposition I lay before you is almost in the Words of the Text, *namely, That Christ's spiritual Seed shall*

shall endure for ever. The same Thing is promised in the 4th and 36th Verses of the *Psalms*, and the Promise is ratified and confirmed by the Oath of God, in the 3d and 4th Verses. *I have sworn unto David my Servant, thy Seed will I establish for ever.* And in the 35th and 36th Verses, *Once have I sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lie unto David; His Seed shall endure for ever.* The frequent Repetition of this Promise, and with such a Solemnity, shews us of what Importance and Weight this Subject is; and truly it is of great Use, to support and confirm the Faith of Believers in Christ under all shaking and trying Dispensations of divine Providence towards the Church and People of God, and particularly under the sad Thoughts of Heart that we may have from the low State and Condition of the Churches of Christ at this Day. It is also very useful to quicken and encourage us to our Duty, therefore I shall insist a little upon it; and, in discoursing it, I shall endeavour, *first*, to shew you whom we are to understand by Christ's Seed. *2dly*. Why they are called his Seed. *3dly*. How or by what Means they have been preserved in all Ages and Generations. *4thly*. I shall lay before you some few Considerations for confirming you in the Faith of this important Truth. *5thly*. I shall shew you why it is that Christ's spiritual Seed must endure for ever. And, in the *last* Place, I shall make some practical Use and Improvement of this Subject.

The first Thing proposed is, to shew who are meant by Christ's Seed.

First, All that are ordained unto eternal Life are Christ's spiritual Seed; there is a Remnant, according unto the Election of Grace, even a goodly Number of the apostate and lost Race of Mankind,

Mankind, who were chosen unto eternal Life before the Foundations of the World were laid, *Rom. viii. 29. Eph. i. 4.* All those are Christ's spiritual Seed ; they are his Seed in the Purpose and in the Decree of God ; they are his Seed by the Father's Gift and Grant unto him ; they are the Men who were given unto Christ out of the World, *John xvii. 6.* They are his Seed in respect of his Undertaking for them ; he undertook from all Eternity to pay the Price of their Redemption from Sin and Wrath, and to bring in a Law-biding Righteousness for their Justification. As all the Posterity of the first *Adam* were in him, as their common Head and Representatives, when the Covenant of Works was transacted with him, so all the Elect was in Christ the second *Adam*, as their common Head and Representative, when God transacted with him ; and, in this eternal Transaction, not only was all needful Furniture promised unto the Redeemer, to enable him to discharge the Work and Trust undertaken by him, but also the Promise of Life, forfeited by the Apostasy of the first *Adam*, is given unto him as the second *Adam*, the Head of the new Family, and the Heir of all Things. Hence, *Tit. i. 2.* it is said, *In Hope of eternal Life, which God that cannot lie promised before the World began.* Yea, all the Grace designed for the Vessels of Mercy in Time, is laid up in the second *Adam* as the common Treasury and Store-House : *For in him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, Col. ii. 3.* And it is *of his Fulness that we receive, and Grace for Grace, John i. 16.* And all the Grace wherewith the Vessels of Mercy are filled in Time, is given them in Christ Jesus before the World began, *2-Tim. i. 9.* All this is very well expressed

pressed, in a very few Words, in the Answer to that Question in our larger Catechism, *With whom was the Covenant of Grace made?* The Answer is, *The Covenant of Grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the Elect as his Seed,* Gal. iii. 16. Rom. v. 15.

Secondly, All who are effectually called are Christ's spiritual Seed. The Elect, in effectual Calling, are united unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and are made joint Heirs with him unto the Promises, Gal. iii. 29. And, if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according unto the Promise : It is in their effectual Calling that the Elect obtain an actual Interest in the Promises. For clearing this Matter a little, you may observe, that tho' all the Posterity of the first Adam were in him as their common Head and Representative, when he sinned and fell, yet they have no actual Communion with him in his Sin, till once they have a Being in him by natural Generation ; then it is that his Sin is imputed unto them, and then it is that they derive a corrupted and depraved Nature from him, Rom. v. 12, 14, 15, 16. Even so, tho' all the Elect were virtually in the second Adam as their Head and Representative, yet they have not actual Communion with him in his Grace, till the Day of their mystical Union with him, when they are apprehended by the Spirit, sent down from the living and Life-giving Head, and are enabled by a lively Faith to apprehend him ; then it is that his Righteousness is imputed unto them, and the Promise of eternal Life does then become theirs in their own Persons. In a Word, then it is that they receive the Remission of Sins, and an Inheritance among them which are sanctified by Faith that is in him, Acts xxvi. 18. It is of the E-
lect

lest converted, or of such who truly believe in the Lord Jesus, that I understand the Promise in our Text. *His Seed also will I make to endure for ever*; that is, such as really believe in him shall never altogether fail from off the Earth; he shall have some such in all Ages and Generations upon the Earth.

I proceed to the *second* Thing proposed, *namely*, To shew you why Believers in Christ are called his Seed.

First, They all spring from him; they are his genuine Issue and Offspring, *Isa. xxii. 24. And they shall hang upon him all the Glory of his Father's House, the Offspring and the Issue.* They spring from the Sufferings and Death of Christ, *Isa. liii. 10. When thou shalt make his Soul an Offering for Sin, he shall see his Seed.* They are the Travail of Christ's Soul, *Isa. liii. 11. In his State of Humiliation he travailed to bring forth many Children to God.* They spring from his Resurrection from the Dead, *1 Pet. i. 3. He hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead.* They spring from the Covenant-Transaction with him; this glorious Bargain is laid open in the Word and Promises of the Gospel, and by the Word of Truth they are begotten unto him, *James i. 18. Of his own Will begat he us with the Word of Truth.* They are born of the incorruptible Seed of the Word, *1 Pet. i. 23.* They are brought forth and nourished by the Means of the Word of Promise; therefore they are called the Children of Promise, *Gal. iv. 28.* They all descend from him as their Father, and are born of his Spirit, *John iii. 5, 6.*

2dly. Believers in Christ are called his Seed, because they have all their spiritual Being from him:

him : As Children have their natural Being from their Parents, so Believers have a spiritual Being from Christ ; whatever they have as they are Believers, they have it from him : They have all their spiritual Life from him, for he quickens them when they are dead in Trespasses and Sins, *Eph. ii. 1, 4, 5.* They have that Faith, from which they are denominated Believers, from him, for it is the Faith of his Operation, *Col. ii. 12.* They have that Righteousness, whereby they are justified in the Sight of God, only from him, *Isa. liv. 17. Their Righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.* Also they have all their Sanctification from him ; for he is made of God unto them Sanctification, *1 Cor. i. 30.* In a Word, they have all Grace and Glory from him, *for he giveth both Grace and Glory, Psalm lxxxiv. 11.*

3^{dly}. Believers in Christ are called his Seed, because of that Resemblance that they bear unto the Lord Jesus ; as Children resemble their Parents, so all Christ's spiritual Seed resemble himself. 1st. They resemble him in the new Nature that is given unto him ; as Children have the same Nature with their Parents, so Believers in Christ are Partakers in the divine Nature, *2 Pet. i. 4.* The divine Nature, in which they are said to partake, is their Renovation in the Spirit of their Minds, or the new Man, *which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness, Eph. iv. 23, 24.* 2^{dly}. They resemble Christ in the Spirit that is given unto them ; the same Spirit that is in Christ, is also given unto every Believer. The Holy Ghost was indeed given to him above Measure, but he is given unto every one of them according to their Measure, yet he is the same Spirit both in the Head and in all the Members of the

the mystical Body. The Holy Ghost did rest upon the Head, as a Spirit of Wisdom and Knowledge, and he is given unto all his Members, as the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of Christ, *Isa. xi. 2. Eph. i. 17.* The holy Spirit did rest upon Christ as the Spirit of Might, and all his spiritual Seed are strengthened with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man, *Eph. iii. 16.* The Spirit descended upon the Head as the Spirit of Holiness, and he is given unto every one that believes as the Spirit of Sanctification, *1 Cor. vi. 11.* The Spirit did likewise rest upon the Head as a Spirit of Supplications, for in the Days of his Flesh he offered up Prayers and Supplications with strong Crying and Tears, *Heb. v. 7.* and he is promised and given as the Spirit of Grace and Supplication unto all his spiritual Seed, *Zech. xii. 10.* He is in them the Spirit of Adoption whereby they cry *Abba, Father*, *Rom. viii. 15.* 3dly. Believers in Christ resemble him in their Graces, such as Faith, Love, Zeal, and the like. The Head and Captain of Salvation was eminent for his Faith and Trust in God, *Heb. ii. 13.* for Love to and Zeal for his Father's Honour and Glory; *The Zeal of thy House did eat me up.* Likewise for his Humility and Meekness, *Matth. xi. 29. Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart;* and all Christ's spiritual Seed bear some Resemblance and Likeness to him in these; they are a People that put their Trust in the Lord, *Psaln ix. 10.* It is a Character of them, that they love him, *1 Pet. i. 8.* they are the Meek of the Earth, *Psaln xxi. 9.*

4thly. Believers in Christ are called his Seed because of his tender Care and Concern about them. As Parents are naturally careful of their Children, so the Lord Christ has the Heart of a Father

Father towards his People, and the Care and Concern of a Father for them. 1st. He loveth them as a Father loveth his Children. The Love of a Parent to his Children is a tender Love, a great Love, a compassionate and sympathizing Love; so is the Love of Christ unto his People: He loveth them with a tender Love. As the affectionate Parent carries the little Child in his Arms, and lays it in his Bosom, so it is said of Christ, that *he gathereth his Lambs with his Arm, and carries them in his Bosom*, Isa. xl. 11. Likeways the Love of Christ unto his People is a very great Love. Parents will readily expose themselves to very great Dangers for the Sake of their Children; but the Love of Christ excels in Greatness; he exposed himself to the greatest of all Dangers, for the Sake of all his spiritual Seed, even to the Wrath of a Sin-revenging God, and to Death armed with its direful Sting, Eph. v. 2. *Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us.* Also the Love of Christ unto his People is a compassionate and sympathizing Love, Psalm ciii. 13. *Like as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* Who can express the Pity, Sympathy, the Yearnings of Bowels that are in a tender-hearted Parent towards his Child, especially in its Affliction and Distress? Yet this is but a faint Emblem and Shadow of that Pity and Sympathy that is with the Lord Jesus towards his People, such as a Sympathy with them, that *in all their Afflictions he is afflicted*, Isa. lxiii. 19: and whoever toucheth them, toucheth him in the most tender and sensible Part, Zech. ii. 8. *For he that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of his Eye.*

2^{dly}. Parents are careful to provide for their Children, even so Christ has made a liberal and

and large Provision for all his spiritual Seed, he hath provided a goodly Heritage for them, even the Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, and unto the Hope of this Inheritance they are begotten, *1 Pet. i. 3, 4.* He has made Provision of all spiritual Blessings for them, he will give them both Grace and Glory, *Psal. lxxxiv. 11.* and whatever temporal Blessings are needful for them, these are provided in the Covenant likeways, *Isa. xxxiii. 16.* *Their Bread shall be given them, and their Water shall be sure.* 3dly. He corrects them as a Father doth his Children, the Duty of a Parent is carefully to correct the Child when the Rod is needful; and when the Lord sees the Rod to be needful for his Children, he will not spare it, *Rev. iii. 19.* *As many as I love I rebuke and chasten,* *Heb. xii. 8.* *If ye be without Chastisement, whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Bastards, and not Sons.* And in the Verses following our Text, 30, 31, 32. *If his Children forsake my Law——Then will I visit their Transgressions with the Rod.*

5thly. Believers in Christ are called his Seed, because in him they have a Right and Title unto all Things. All are yours, and ye are Christ's, *1 Cor. iii. 22.* The Head of the Family, as we have observed already, is the Heir of all Things, *Heb. i. 2.* and all Children of the Family are joint Heirs with him, *Rom. viii. 17.* All the Promises are given unto Christ in the first Instance, *Gal. iii. 16.* *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made. He saith not, and to Seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Christ.* And in him all the Promises of Grace and Glory are *Yea, and Amen,* unto all his spiritual Seed. The Head of the Family has the first Right and Title

Title to plead the Covenant-Relation. In the 26th Verse of this Psalm, *He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, thou art my God, and the Rock of my Salvation*: And it is in him, even under the Shadow of his Wings, that all the Children of the Family may with the Boldness of Faith cry unto him, *Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation*. It is in him that they may plead the Relation; therefore he says, *John xx. 17. I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God*. Christ the Head of the Family has the first Right and Title to the Kingdom, to the Glory, and to the Throne; and in him all his spiritual Seed have a Right and Title unto the Kingdom, *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me*; yea, in him they have a Right and Title unto his Glory, and unto his Throne, *John xvii. 22. And the Glory which thou gavest me I have given them, Rev. iii. 21. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his Throne*.

I proceed to the third Thing proposed, *namely, To shew you, how or by what Means Christ's spiritual Seed have been preserved in all Ages and Generations*.

I answer, *1st. By the Ministry of the Word*.

2^{dly}. By the Concurrence of the Spirit of God with the Word.

3^{dly}. By the Church's wrestling with God in Prayer.

4^{thly}. By the Word of their Testimony.
And,

5^{thly}. By remarkable Appearances of the Lord amongst them and for them.

I shall upon each of these Heads give you some particular

particular Instances with reference to the Lord's Church and People in this Land.

In the first Place, Christ's spiritual Seed have been preserved in all Ages by the Ministry of the Word. This is the great outward Mean that the Lord hath made Use, and doth still make Use of for bringing forth a Seed unto himself, it is the Rod of his Strength, by which his People are made willing in the Day of his Power, *Psalms* cx. 2, 3. The Word of the Gospel was first preached in Paradise by the Angel of the Covenant, to our first Parents immediately after their dismal Apostasy in that Promise, *Gen.* iii. 15. *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed, &c.* We have no Ground to doubt of the Success of this Preaching, and from it we may date the bringing forth of a spiritual Offspring unto the Lord Jesus, which have continued ever since, and will continue to the End of Time. The same Word of the Gospel was preached unto Abraham, *Gal.* iii. 8. compared with *Gen.* xii. 3. And it was believed by him, *Rom.* iv. 3. *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for Righteousness.* This Word was given by the Lord to the whole Church of *Israel*, and great was the Company of those that published it, *Psalms* lxxviii. 11. The Apostles were also commanded to preach the Word of the Gospel, first at *Jerusalem*, and then among the Nations, *Luke* xxiv. 47. The preaching of the Gospel was the great Mean by which the Kingdom of Pagan Darkness was first shaken, and afterwards gradually destroyed, throughout the Roman Empire; even in the Apostolick Age, their Sound went unto all the Earth, and their Words to the Ends of the World, *Rom.* x. 18. The Sound of the Gospel went at that

that Time, not only through the *Roman Empire*, but also to these Places of the Earth into which the *Roman Arms* had not then penetrated : And it is very probable, that our barbarous Forefathers in *Scotland* were early enlightned by the Word of the Gospel, if not in the Apostolick Age, yet in the Beginning of the next. Thus, as the Walls of *Jericho* did fall before the Blowing of Rams Horns, so was *Pagan Idolatry* destroyed by the Blowing of the great Trumpet of the Gospel. Again, when gross Antichristian Darkeness had covered the Christian World, it pleased the Lord, by the pure Preaching of the Word of the Gospel, to shake the Kingdom of Antiehrst. By this glorious Mean, whole Nations and Provinces were brought off from their blind Subjection to Antiehrst ; and, amongst others, *Scotland*, being covered with Popish Darkeness, was, in the Century preceeding the last, again illuminated by the Ministry of a *Hamilton, Wishart* and *Knox* ; who may be justly reckoned amongst the first three ; and, by their Ministry, a numerous Seed was brought forth to the Lord Jesus, which have been preserved in *Scotland* by the preaching of the Word, even when the Church of Christ in this Land has been brought very low. As for Instance, in the late cruel persecuting Days, it was by a preached Gospel in Corners and in the Desarts, that a spiritual Seed were preserved unto the Lord Jesus.

2dly. Christ's spiritual Seed have endured in all Ages by the Concurrence of the Holy Spirit with the Word : The Word is only a Mean, it has no Efficacy of itself, all the Efficacy depends upon the Energy of the Holy Ghost ; it is through the Power of the Spirit, accompanying the Word, that it has done such great Things upon the Earth.

Earth. The Word in the Hand of the Spirit of God has prevailed over the strong Powers of Darkness, it has overcome Nations and Provinces, and brought many of Christ's Enemies unto a professed outward Subjection, and others unto a real and cordial Subjection unto him. *The Arrows of the Word, when directed by the Spirit of God, is sharp in the Hearts of the King's Enemies, Psalm xlv. 5.* The Old Testament Believers had the Spirit of Faith given unto them, and the same Spirit of Faith is given under the New Testament Dispensation, 1 Cor. iv. 13. only, under the New Testament Dispensation, there is a more plentiful and more extensive Effusion of the Holy Spirit; the Success that the Gospel had in the Apostles Days, and also in our reforming Days, was wholly owing to the Concurrence of the Spirit with the Word; and by this Means Christ's spiritual Seed have been preserved to this very Day, according to that Promise, *Isa. lix. 21. My Spirit that is upon thee, and my Words that I have put in thy Mouth, shall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed's Seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* I might here condescend upon some particular Instances of a more than ordinary Down-pouring of the Spirit accompanying the Word, but I will have Occasion to mention these afterwards.

3dly. The Lord Christ's spiritual Seed have been preserved by wrestling with God in Prayer; this is a Mean the Church and People of God have tried with good Success, when they have been brought very low; and frequently, when the Lord is about to give any great Deliverance to his Church and People, he pours out a Spirit of Prayer: When the Children of *Israel* were sighing

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under their Bondage in *Egypt*, they cried unto the Lord, and their Cry came up unto him, and he heard their Groaning, and remembred his Covenant, *Exod.* ii. 23, 24. When the Church was in great Danger in *Esther's* Days, she fasted and prayed, and appointed *Mordecai* and the rest of the *Jews* at *Shushan* to do so, *Esther* iv. 15, 16. and the Lord answered their Prayers, by giving them a wonderful Deliverance: Likewise the Members of the infant primitive Church, *Acts* i. 14. were all with one Accord in Prayer and Supplication, before that remarkable Down-pouring of the Spirit on the Day of *Pentecoste*. We have had a great Company of Ministers and Christians in *Scotland* who have had Power with God, and have prevailed in Prayer; their Prayers have sometimes been a Terror to their very Enemies. When Queen *Mary* heard of Mr. *Knox* and the Congregation their Fasting and Praying, she declared she was more afraid of their Prayers than of ten thousand Men in Arms: And the History bears, that the Lord gave a remarkable Return to their Prayer. Amongst many others that might be named, Mr. *Wilbart*, one of the first three, after more than ordinary Nearness to God in Prayer, expressed himself in this Manner: 'This Realm
' shall be illuminated with the Light of Christ's Gospel, as clearly as ever any Realm since the Days
' of the Apostles; the House of God shall be build-
' ded in it, yea, it shall not lack, (said he) till that
' the Glory of God shall evidently appear, and shall
' once triumph in Despite of *Satan*: But, alas! if
' the People shall be after unthankful, then fearful
' and terrible shall be the Plagues that shall follow'. Famous Mr. *Welsh*, who ordinarily spent eight Hours of the four and twenty in Prayer, was overheard expressing himself after this Manner:

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ner : O Lord, wilt thou not give me *Scotland* ! And he lived and died in the Faith of it, that the Lord would preserve a Remnant in *Scotland*. Likewise great Mr. *Robert Bruce*, after some Time spent in Fasting and Prayer for the Church of Christ in *Scotland*, at that Time groaning under Prelatick Tyranny and Oppression, expressed his Hopes of that glorious Deliverance which was afterwards given unto this Church in the Year 1638. But particular Instances of this Nature are so many, that I must stop, and not launch forth into them : I shall only observe, upon this Head, that the Wrestlers in Prayer for the Church of Christ in this Land, have found Footing for Faith and Hope in that Promise, *Psalms* ii. 8. *I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the utmost Ends of the Earth for thy Possession.*

4thly. Christ's spiritual Seed have been preserved by the Word of their Testimony. This is another notable Mean by which a Seed have endured to the Lord in all Ages and Generations. By this Mean they were preserved, under hot Persecution, from *Rome Pagan* and *Antichristian*. Hence, *Revs.* xii. 11. It is said, *They overcame by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their Testimony* ; they did bear Witness to the Truth in Face of the greatest Opposition. They did confess and own the Truths of Christ, when these were either openly born down by violent Persecutors, or secretly undermined by cunning Seducers, and, in doing so, they did prevail and overcome ; and truly this is a special Mean by which the Truths of Christ have been transmitted in their Purity from one Generation to another. I shall notice three Ways by which the Word of the Church's Testimony has been given, particularly in *Scotland*. In the first Place, by

by publick Confessions. These have been, and are the Church's Testimony unto the Truths of Christ against rising and prevailing Errors; they are publick Declarations to the World, what Things are received and believed by the Church as the Truths of God agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, the only infallible Rule of Faith, and what is rejected by the Church as contrary thereunto, or of what the Church believes to be Truth, and condemns as Errors. Our Confessions of Faith in the Church of *Scotland* have been blessed Means for preserving Purity, Harmony and Unity in the Faith amongst us: Our first Confession of Faith is that which was received and approven by this Church in the Year 1560. and it contains this Church's Testimony unto the Truths of Christ, given in a special Manner in Opposition to the Errors of the Church of *Rome*. Our last Confession of Faith, compiled by that learned and grave Assembly at *Westminster*, and received by this Church anno 1647. is in many Things more full than our first, and contains the Words of this Church's Testimony to the Truths of Christ, both in Opposition to the Errors of Popery, and also unto many other Errors that had sprung up in the Church since the Reformation. Our national Covenant doth also bear the Title of the Confession of Faith of all Ranks in *Scotland*; and truly our national Covenants were a more solemn avouching of the Truth, and particularly of those that were then most opposed, and a more solemn engaging against Sin and Errors that the Church was then most in Danger of. All Confessions of Faith are now cried down by some in this Age, as an Imposition upon the Consciences of Men, and as an Incroachment upon our Christian Liberty; but that

that Liberty which those Men would have, it is a Liberty to vent and propagate Error and Heresy, to the Dishonour of God, and the Ruining of the Souls of others. Our national Covenants are undervalued and despised by others, not only by a Set of Men who have, ever since the Reformation, declared their Enmity at the Work of God in this Land, I mean the Popish and Prelatick Party; but there are some lately sprung up amongst us, who, pretending to more Strictness, cry down all national Covenanting, as not warranted under the New Testament Dispensation; but, as national Covenanting was no Part of *the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances*, (which is now indeed abrogated by the Coming of Christ in the Flesh) so it has been a blessed Mean in the Hand of the Lord, for preserving and transmitting to us the Doctrine, Worship, Government, and Discipline of the Lord's House, pure and free from antichristian Errors and Superstition. *2dly.* The Word of the Church's Testimony is given by her Office-Bearers, particularly her Ministers in the preaching of the Word. The faithful Ministers of the Church do, in their publick preachings, bear Testimony unto Truth, and against the Errors and Evils of their Day and Time. This Church has been blessed with a great Cloud of such Witnesses, who have preached down every Thing contrary unto the covenanted Doctrine, Worship, and Government of Christ's House in this Land; and they have overcome by *the Word of their Testimony*: And if we are enabled to use this Mean honestly and faithfully, we have Ground to hope we shall overcome the rising and prevailing Evils of our Day and Time. *3dly.* The Word of the Church's Testimony is given, by owning and confessing the Truths in Face of the greatest

greatest Danger. Christ has had, in all Ages, his Witnesses, who have *not loved their Lives unto Death*, who have *resisted unto Blood, striving against Sin*, and his spiritual Seed have been rather increased than diminished by all the sad Sufferings they have been exposed unto; as it was with *Israel in Egypt*, so it has been with them in all Ages, *the more they were afflicted the more they grew*: The Church's suffering Times have been her most thriving Times. The Church of *Scotland* has likewise given her Testimony unto the Truths of Christ, by sore and sharp Sufferings, before the Reformation was established; the Word of her Testimony was given and sealed by the Blood of several against the Idolatry and Tyranny of the Church of *Rome*; and, since the Reformation, the Word of her Testimony has been stated for the Royal Power and Authority of the Lord Jesus in his own House, and for that Government which he hath appointed in it: These two Points are a notable Branch of the covenanted Testimony of the Church of *Scotland*, to which a great Number have born Witness *even unto Death*, particularly in the late persecuting Times, and *they overcame by the Blood of the Lamb, and the Word of their Testimony*.

5thly. Christ's spiritual Seed have been preserved by remarkable Appearances of the Lord amongst them. To speak of the great Appearances of God in Behalf of his Church is a large Subject. I shall confine myself to few particular Heads, and give some particular Instances under each of them. In the

First Place, The Lord has appeared in his Church by raising up eminent Instruments, fitted and qualified for discharging the Duties they were called to, and encountering the Difficulties that were in their

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Way : Thus *Moses* and *Aaron* were raised up to be the Instruments of the Church's Deliverance from the Oppression and Bondage they were under in *Egypt* ; likewise, when the Church and People of God were in Captivity in *Babylon*, the Lord stirred up the Spirit of *Cyrus* King of *Persia* to give Liberty to the captive *Jews* to return, and raised up *Zerubbabel* and others to bring them back from *Babylon*, Ezek. i. 5. and ii. 2. Also the Apostles were indued with *Power from on high* for preaching the Gospel, and laying the Foundation of the New Testament. In like Manner, when the Lord was about to bring his Church and People of *Scotland* out of antichristian Bondage and Darknes, he raised up his *Zerubbabels*, who laid the Foundation of a glorious Work of Reformation. The first three that I have already named were eminently fitted for the Duties and Difficulties of their Day ; the Lord also stirred up the Spirits of some of the first Rank in the Land to put to their Hands to his own Work ; and as in that Period, so in after Periods since that Time, he has raised up Instruments fitted for the Dangers and Difficulties in which the Church has been.

2dly. The Lord has appeared amongst his Church and People, by pouring down his Spirit in a remarkable Way and Manner. The Spirit of the Lord was promised to the Children of *Israel* and *Judah*, at their Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity, Jer. l. 4, 5. *The Children of Israel shall come, they and the Children of Judah together, going and weeping, — saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant that shall not be forgotten.* Likewise, on the Day of Pentecoste, Acts ii. the Holy Ghost was poured down in an extraordinary Manner, and 3000 were born at once
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in *Zion*, by such remarkable Showers of the Spirit a spiritual Seed have been brought forth, and preserved to the Lord Jesus. I shall upon this Head confine myself to a few particular Instances of this Kind in the Church of *Scotland*.

1st. At the Beginning of the Reformation, the Word of the Gospel had such wonderful Success, that, in a short Time, the whole Body of the Nation made a professed Subjection unto the Lord Jesus Christ. In 1560. the first Confession of Faith was approven in Parliament, and the Pope's Authority in *Scotland* was abolished, when a very few Years before that antichristian Darkness was over the whole Land. Such marvellous Success had the Word of the Gospel, that it might be said a whole Nation was born at once. That Prophecy was remarkably accomplished in *Scotland*, Isa. lxvi. 8. *Who hath heard such a Thing? who hath seen such Things? Shall the Earth be made to bring forth in one Day? or shall a Nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her Children.* This great Work was wrought by a more than ordinary Concurrence of the Spirit of God with the Word.

A second Instance is, that remarkable Event * in the Year 1596. The General Assembly of this Church, being convened at *Edinburgh*, did meet by themselves the 30th of *March*, at nine of the Clock, in the little Church of *Edinburgh*, for solemn Humiliation on Account of their own Sins and the Sins of the Land; and there being assembled together about 400 Ministers, Elders, and select Christians, there was an extraordinary Down pouring of the Spirit upon them, and such deep Humiliation and Mourning amongst

mongst them, as that the Place where they were met together might be called a *Bochim*; and before they parted every one of them lifted up their Hands to the Lord, and sware to pursue personal and national Reformation; the like of that Day had not been seen in *Scotland* since the Reformation. This same Practice was, by Order of the Assembly, followed in all the Synods of this Church, and afterwards in Presbyteries, and in the several particular Congregations through the Land. This solemn Renovation of Covenant-Engagements unto the Lord, was the Fruit of a Shower of the Spirit of God that did at that Time go through the whole Land.

† A third remarkable Instance is in the Year 1625, when the Church was under a dark Cloud, and the Persecution very hot from the Prelatick Party; about that Time there was an extraordinary Out-letting of the Spirit of God, a great Spring-Tide of the Gospel, and that for some Years Continuance, in the West of *Scotland*, in so much that the Power of Godliness did advance from one Place to another, and a marvellous Lustre was to be seen on those Parts of the Country. There is one remarkable Appearance of God under this Period, that deserves particularly to be remembred, namely, that solemn Communion at the *Kirk of Shots*, June 20. 1630. where there was a great Down-pouring of the Spirit accompanying the Ordinances, especially the *Monday's* Sermon, that it was reckoned near five hundred had a discernible Change wrought on them at that Time; many of whom could date their Conversion, and others some remarkable Confirmation from that Day. At this

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Time a numerous Seed were brought forth to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a People prepared for the Coming of the Lord, in that glorious Work which he wrought *anno* 1638. which leads me to a

Fourth Instance ; and it is that great Down-pouring of the Spirit upon all Ranks of Persons in the said Year 1638. when the whole Land did shake off the Yoke of Prelacy, and did return by solemn national Covenanting unto the Lord. Famous Mr. *Livingston* tells us, in his Life written by himself, that he has seen a Thousand lifting up their Hands to the Lord at once, and not a dry Face amongst them : He observes likewise, that the whole Land went in most willingly to the Oath of God ; surely there was no Force, no Compulsion here : Yea, a General Assembly of the Church of *Scotland* testifies with what Joy the Land entred into the Oath of God. In the Act of Assembly 1648. approving the Solemn League and Covenant, we find these remarkable Words, ' And having taken the same, (*viz.* ' the Solemn League and Covenant) as a Matter ' of so publick Concern doth require, into their ' gravest Consideration, did with all their Hearts, ' and with the Beginnings of the Feelings of that ' Joy which they did find in so great Measure upon the Renovation of the National Covenant of ' this Kirk and Kingdom, all with one Voice approve and embrace the same.' The Solemn League and Covenant was also sworn with much Cheerfulness and Joy in *Scotland* and *England*, *anno* 1643. and renewed again in *Scotland*, with a solemn Acknowledgment of Sin and Engagement to Duty, *anno* 1648. In these covenanting Times there was plentiful Effusion of the Spirit of God upon all Ranks, and many were turned unto the Lord, though, no doubt, there were not a few that were only

only brought under some common Influences and Impressions, as their after Apostasy and Defection from the Covenant and the Oath of God made too evident to the World; yet saving Knowledge and the Things of God, and Acquaintance with the Power of Godliness, did increase, the sealing Comforts of the Spirit of God were bestowed upon many, some of whom did afterwards *resist unto Blood, striving against Sin*. I shall only add upon this Head, whatever Contempt some Men may cast upon national Covenanting, and our solemn national Covenants, yet Scotland's covenanting Days were amongst her best Days; for the Life and Power of Religion and Godliness, and national Covenanting, have been signally owned and countenanced of the Lord. 3thly. I may add likewise, that very discernible Influences of the Spirit did accompany a preached Gospel in the late persecuting Times. All the Violence and Rage of wicked Persecutors could not hinder Multitudes from resorting unto a preached Gospel in the Fields and in Deserts, and the Lord accompanied his own Word with such Light, Life and Power, that many were brought in to the Lord Jesus, and others were confirmed and established, and so were fitted and prepared to suffer, for the Truths of Christ, unto Imprisonment and Banishment, yea, even unto Death itself. The most Part of that Generation are now gone off the Stage; but some of you are yet alive, and hearing me, who felt the warm Influences of Heaven under a preached Gospel at that Time.

3dly. Christ's spiritual Seed have been preserved by remarkable Deliverances given them, when they have been in the greatest Danger; the Lord has often appeared gloriously; when Men have appointed them to Ruin and Destruction, and all outward

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Appearance of Help and Relief has failed them, as in *Esther's* Days, when the whole Church was in Danger of Destruction, what a wonderful and unexpected Deliverance did the Lord give them; and truly the Church of *Scotland* has Reason to say, *Had not the Lord been on our Side, when Men rose up against us, they had swallowed us up quick, when their Wrath was kindled against us.* The remarkable Deliverances the Lord has given to his Church in this Land, in the Day of our Strait and Danger, are so many, that I can scarce venture to descend into Particulars. I shall only mention two memorable Eighty-eighths, in which the Lord appeared wonderfully for his Church in these Lands. The first is, that great Appearance of God in the Year 1588. in breaking the *Spanish* Armada, when a Design was formed for ruining the Protestant Interest, both in these Lands and also abroad. Again, a Century of Years after this, when the very same Danger threatned the whole Protestant Interest, especially in these Lands, how wonderfully did the Lord appear in that glorious Revolution in the Year 1688? His own Right-Hand did then work Salvation for us: And as at that Time the Lord did give us a very remarkable Deliverance, when we were upon the Brink of Ruin; so we have been preserved ever since, by a continued Series and Train of remarkable Providences. These are some of the special Means by which Christ's Seed have endured in all Ages and Generations.

To proceed now to the *fourth* Thing that I proposed upon this Doctrine, and that is,

To lay before you some Things for confirming you in the Faith of this important Truth, That Christ's Seed shall endure for ever. Let us here take a View of some of the Attempts of Satan, the

the grand Adversary of the Church and People of God, to root out Christ's Spiritual Seed ; and let us also too consider how, notwithstanding of all these, the Church has been still preserved. A few Observations to this Purpose may be of Use to strengthen our Faith in this great Truth.

Before I proceed unto Particulars, you may observe, That in all Ages Satan has still employed all his Malice, Power and Policy, against Christ's Seed, to root them out. There is an Intimation of this in the very first Revelation of the Gospel, Gen. iii. 15. *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed.* This Enmity between the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman, is not only between the Serpent and Christ personal, but between the Serpent and his Seed, that is, Satan and the wicked and ungodly World on the one Hand, and the Seed of the Woman, that is Christ mystical, Head and Members, the Lord Jesus Christ and all true Believers in him, on the other Hand. The War was first proclaimed in Paradise by the Lord himself, and it continues to this very Day without any Cessation of Arms, and will do so to the End of the World. Many Times Satan has thrust fore at Christ's Seed, but he hath never prevailed over them, and never shall. Sometimes, indeed, the Church has been brought very low, yea, so low, that, to outward Appearance, she has been as it were consumed ; but still she has risen more glorious out of her own Ashes. *The Archers have thrust sore at her, but her Bow hath abode in Strength.* Her Motto has always been, *Persecuted, but not forsaken ; Cast down, but not overcome.* The Bush burning, and not consumed, which Moses saw and wondred at, was a lively Emblem of the Preservation of Christ's spiritual

ritual Seed, in all Ages, from the Fury and Rage of Satan and his Seed. The Attempts of Satan to destroy the Church are compared to a Flood, which that old Serpent casts out of his Mouth after the Woman, that he may cause her to be carried away by it, *Rev. xii. 15.* I shall name a three-fold Flood that the old Serpent hath been casting out of his Mouth against Christ's spiritual Seed, and shew you that, notwithstanding of these, they have been still preserved.

First, A Flood of Profanilty; *adly,* A Flood of Persecution; *3dly,* A Flood of Error: By these dangerous Floods the Serpent hath still endeavoured to carry away the Woman and her Seed; yet they have lived under them, and shall endure for ever.

First, The old Serpent casts a Flood of Profanilty out of his Mouth against Christ's spiritual Seed: Such a Flood did in *Noah's* Days overflow the whole Earth, and swelled to such a Height, that God was provoked to sweep the Inhabitants of the Earth away with a Deluge of Waters, *Gen. vi. 5, 6, 7.* And here you may notice, *1st.* That, under this Inundation of Wickedness, Christ's spiritual Seed were brought very low, so low that they were confined in one Family, wherein there were no more than eight Persons, and neither were all these eight Persons of that Number; for there was a cursed *Ham* amongst them. You may observe, *2dly.* That as the Lord preserved this small Remnant from the wicked Contagion of that sinful Time, so he provided for their Safety against the Deluge of Water that came upon the whole Earth, *Heb. xi. 7.* *Noah, being warned of God, prepared an Ark to the saving of his House.* The Serpent has been casting out this Flood of Profanilty

nity in all Ages against the Church ; and we are warned, that, in the last Days especially, the Church shall be in great Hazard and Danger from it : and therefore those Days of abounding Wickedness and Profanity are called *perillous Times*, 2 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4. And truly he that runs may read it, that there is an universal Looseness in Practice, even in the reformed Churches, at this Day : the common Impressions of God are like to wear off the Spirits of Men, it may be said all Flesh have corrupted their Way ; this is for a Lamentation : But yet Christ's spiritual Seed have been preserved under this overflowing Flood formerly, and we have Ground to believe they shall yet be preserved.

2dly. Satan casts out a Flood of Persecution against Christ's spiritual Seed ; he stirs up his Instruments, the Wicked and Ungodly, to persecute them. By Persecution I understand all the Violence done by a wicked World unto the People of God, in their Names, Persons, or Estates, by Reproaches, spoiling of Goods, Imprisonments, cruel Tortures, and the like ; as also by killing and slaying of them, as not worthy to live in the World, when yet the World is not worthy of them, *Heb. xi. 38*. When the Church was in *Adam's* Family, *Cain* did persecute his Brother *Abel* to Death : And the Apostle testifies what Sufferings the Witnesses for Christ did with Patience and Faith undergo, *Heb. xi. 36, 27, 38*. I shall here mention three remarkable suffering Periods of the Church under the Old Testament, to which there are three grand suffering Periods under the New compared. The first remarkable Period of the Church's Sufferings under the Old Testament, was that in *Egypt*, when they sighed by reason of
their

their heavy Bondage, and that cruel Edict was published commanding all the male Children to be cast into the River, *Exod. i. 22*. This threatned Ruin and Destruction to the whole Church and People of God. A second great Period of the Sufferings of the Church under the Old Testament, was that from the *Chaldeans* by the *Babylonish* Captivity, on Occasion of which, it is probable, the 79th *Psalms* was penned by *Jeremiah*, or some other Prophet, where the Desolation of *Jerusalem*, and the Sufferings they were brought under, are bewailed after a most pathetic Manner, particularly in the first four Verses. A third memorable suffering Period of the Old Testament Church, was that from *Gog* and *Magog*, prophesied by *Ezekiel* in his 38th Chapter. It is thought, that by that Prophecy is intended the sore Persecution which the Church was brought under from *Antiochus Epiphanes*. To these suffering Periods of the Church under the Old Testament, there are three suffering Periods of the Church under the New Testament compared.

The first great suffering Period of the Christian Church, was that Persecution from *Rome*-heathen, called *spiritual Egypt*, *Rev. xi. 8*. This began in the Apostles Days, and did continue, though with various Intermissions, till the Beginning of the fourth Century. It is well known what Cruelties the Christians suffered during this Period, from their heathen Persecutors, and that many Times, throughout the *Roman Empire*, the Blood of the Christians was shed without Mercy. The second grand suffering Period of the New Testament Church, is that from *Rome*-antichristian, called *Babylon the Great*, *Rev. xvii. 5*. It is long since the Church's Sufferings began from this Adversary; and the Histories of preceeding Ages bear Witness how much

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he has suffered from this Enemy. There is scarce one Nation, Province, or City, under the Jurisdiction of *Rome*-antichristian, where the Blood of the Witnesses for Jesus has not been shed. Since our Reformation from Popery the old antichristian persecuting Spirit did exert itself even in this Land, in two remarkable Periods, the one before the notable Year 1638, and the other before the memorable Year 1688. and under both these suffering Times, the Testimony of the Witnesses for Christ in our Land was stated for the Royal Power and Authority of the Lord Jesus in and over his own House, and that Worship and Government that he himself hath instituted in the same, which all Ranks of Persons in the Land had, by most solemn Covenant Engagements unto the most high God, bound both themselves and Generations to come stedfastly to cleave unto. I shall only observe farther on this Head, that though the Lord has begun to appear against Antichrist, yet the Storm is not wholly over. We in this Land do now enjoy a Calm, but our Brethren abroad are groaning under the Tyranny of this Enemy; and who knows, but, ere the Vial is poured out upon the Seat of the Beast, the Cup may pass over again to us? The third suffering Period of the New Testament Church is that spoke of, *Rev. xx. 8*. But this is yet wholly in Prophecy, and therefore we can speak nothing about it. I shall now offer a few Things concerning the Preservation of Christ's spiritual Seed under those Storms of Persecution that have already gone over the Church, for confirming you in the Faith of this Truth, that *his Seed shall endure for ever*.

First, Sealing Times have gone before persecuting Times. When *Jacob* is going down with his Family

milly into *Egypt*, the Lord appears to him, and says, *Fear not to go down into Egypt, I will go down with thee*, Gen. xlv. 3, 4. This Promise, no doubt, was supporting to the Faith of the Church and People of God under the sore Trials that afterward they met with in *Egypt*. That great Effusion of the Spirit at Pentecoste was immediately before the first Persecution raised against the infant Christian Church at *Jerusalem*, of which you read *Acts* viii. 1. The Angels of the four Winds are restrained from hurting *the Earth, the Sea, or the Trees, till the Servants of God are sealed in their Foreheads*, *Rev.* vii. 1, 4. There have been solemn sealing Times in *Scotland* before suffering Times. That remarkable Effusion of the Spirit 1596. which we have already mentioned, went before the first Storm of Persecution that did blow upon this Church after the Reformation : Also, before the last suffering Period, the Spirit of the Lord did accompany Gospel-Ordinances with discernible Power and Success, to the Conversion and Confirmation of many. Some of the Christians who were Witnesses to, and had the Experience of this sealing Work of God, have lived to our own Times ; by this Means a People were prepared for entring into the Furnace.

2dly. We may observe, that Christ's spiritual Seed have been preserved in suffering Times, in regard Persecution has been the Occasion of the spreading of the Gospel. The first Persecution raised against the Church at *Jerusalem* scattered abroad the Disciples, who went every where preaching the Word, *Acts* viii. 4. The Persecution raised by *Domitian* against the Christian Church brought the Gospel to the remote Parts of this Island.

3dly.

3dly. The Church of Christ has sometimes been brought very low under Persecution ; but yet, in the darkest Times that have gone over her, the Lord never wanted his Witnesses. Under *Achab's* persecuting Reign, *Elijah* complains, 1 *Kings* xix. 14. *I, even I only, am left ; yet Ver. 18. I have left me seven thousand in Israel, which have not bowed unto Baal.* Under the cruel Persecutions raised against the Church from *Rome*-heathen, the Lord never wanted his Witnesses : Likeways the Lord had still his Witnesses under all the Storms of Persecution from *Rome*-antichristian ; in the very darkest Times of Popery there were some found to bear Witness for Truth ; and in this Land the Lord hath kept up Witnesses for his Cause and Work, both before and since our Reformation from Popery, notwithstanding all the Severities used by Persecutors.

4thly. We may remark, that the Sufferings of the People of God have been Means blessed for the Conversion of some, and the Confirmation of others. It is an old and true Saying, The Blood of the Martyrs is the Seed of the Church ; their Carriage and Behaviour at Stakes, and on Scaffolds, has struck Beholders with a Conviction that the Lord was in them. and with them of a Truth ; many particular Instances of this Nature might be given, if it were needful.

Finally, All the Church's Persecutions have issued in her farther Enlargement ; the more they were oppressed, the more they grew : This hath been verified in all Ages, and particularly in the Church of *Scotland*. It deserves to be remembred, that, notwithstanding of near 28 Years Persecution, by cruel Harrassings, Confiscation of Goods, Imprisonment, Banishment, and Sufferings unto Death, which

which a great Number of all Ranks of Persons in this Land were exposed unto; yet, at the late glorious Revolution, there was such a goodly Company in all Corners of the Land, to appear for and to own that Cause which had been reproached, despised and persecuted, that the Church of Scotland might with Admiration say, *Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my Children, and am desolate, a Captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?* Isa. xlix. 21.

3dly. Satan casts out of his Mouth a Flood of Error against Christ's spiritual Seed, and truly they have been often in very great Danger from this Flood; Christ warns his Disciples concerning it, *Matth. xxiv. 24, 25. For there shall arise false Christs, and shall shew great Signs and Wonders, in so much, if it was possible, they shall deceive the very Elect. Behold, I have told you before.* Also his Apostles Paul and Peter do warn the Churches of it, *1 Cor. xi. 19. For there must also be Heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest, 1 Tim. iv. 1. Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter Times some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils, 2 Pet. ii. 1. There shall be false Teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable Heresies, denying the Lord that bought them.* Also the Apostle John, *1 Epist. iv. 1. Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits, because many false Prophets are gone out into the World.* Satan did begin to cast out this Flood very early^{an} against the Christian Church: There were some, even in the Apostles Days, who endeavoured to obscure or deny the Doctrine of Justification by the free Grace of God, through the imputed Righteousness of

of the Lord Jesus, as is evident from the Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*. There were others also, who, abusing the Doctrine of Grace, preached up a licentious Liberty, as is evident from the Epistle of *James*. It is remarkable that the Seed of Error has sprung up most in the Day of the Church's outward Calm and Peace; when the Church was delivered from *Pagan* Persecution, and Peace and Liberty were granted her by *Constantine* the Great, she was immediately infested with a Multitude of Errors and Heresies: She enjoyed a short Calm: And what is the first Storm that blows upon her? Lo the *Arian* Heresy breaks forth like an impetuous Torrent, and Corruption, both in Doctrine and Practice, did increase from Time to Time, till *Antichrist* that Man of Sin was fully revealed. With respect to the Church of Christ in this Land, the State of the Controversy since the Reformation has chiefly been, as we have before observed, about the Government and Worship of Christ's House, until these Days of Degeneracy in which we live; wherein Reason is exalted above divine Revelation, the supreme Deity of the Son of God is impugned, and Man's natural Power and Abilities, with respect to Things spiritual, are extolled, with many other new and dangerous Doctrines, which the old Serpent is this Day casting out of his Mouth as a Flood amongst us.

I shall here offer you a few Remarks concerning this Flood, and the Preservation of Christ's spiritual Seed under the same.

First, The Church of Christ has many Times been brought very low by the rising and spreading of Error; this is a Flood that carries away many, and those not of the lowest Size, but such as seem to be tall Cedars in the Church, Men of the

the greatest natural Abilities and Endowments; the unsanctified Gifts of learned Men have done most Mischief unto the Church of Christ; the Church was once brought so low by the *Arian* Heresy, that it was said, The whole World is become *Arian*.

2dly. In every Period of the Church, the Lord has still kept up his Witnesses for Truth against prevailing Error: When the *Arian* Heresy did most prevail, he raised up an *Athanasius* to bear Testimony against it. Whatever Error or Heresies do arise, some Instruments are fitted by the Lord for discovering the Dangers of them, and for contending for the Faith once delivered to the Saints.

3dly. Truth hath always shined forth more brightly from under the Vails of Error that Men have drawn over it. Truth is like the Sun, who shines most brightly when he comes from under the darkest Clouds. All Attempts that have been made against divine Truth, have issued in its brighter Manifestation, and we have Ground to believe that the Clouds, that some are endeavouring at this Day to draw over the Person of the glorious Son of God, or any other of the precious Truths of the Gospel, shall be dissipated and scattered by their Lustre and Glory. I proceed to the *fifth* general Head, to shew you why it is that Christ's spiritual Seed shall endure for ever. I answer,

First, This was promised to him in the Council of Peace before the Foundations of the Earth were laid. In this glorious Transaction, all the Elect were given by the Father unto the Son, to be redeemed and saved by him; he accepted of the Gift, yea, rejoiced in the Gift and Grant that was made him of a Company of miserable perishing Sinners in *Adam's* Family, to do Service to him up-

on the Earth: For his Delights were with the Sons of Men, and his Rejoicing in the habitable Parts of the Earth, before the Mountains were settled, or the Hills brought forth, Prov. viii. 25, 31. &c. The Promise is made to him, that, in every Age and Period of Time, he shall have some of them upon this Earth to be the Objects of this Delight and Joy: He shall see his Seed, Isa. liii. 10. Yea, this Promise is confirmed by the Word of the Oath, Psalm lxxxix. 35, 36. *Once have I sworn by my Holiness, I will not lie unto David; his Seed shall endure for ever.* Also, Verses 3, 4. *I have sworn unto David my Servant, thy Seed will I establish for ever.* These are the two immutable Things in which it is impossible for God to lie; therefore his spiritual Seed must endure for ever.

2dly. This is due unto him as the Reward of his bloody Sufferings: In his State of Humiliation he travailed to bring forth a Seed, Isa. liii. 10. *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to Grief: When thou shalt make his Soul an Offering for Sin, he shall see his Seed, and the Pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his Hand.*

3dly. Christ's Seed must endure for ever, that God may have Witnesses for himself in the World. All Christ's spiritual Seed are his Witnesses: The Ministers of Christ are indeed in a peculiar and special Manner his Witnesses, but they are not his only Witnesses. This Honour have all his Saints in some Measure: Therefore, saith he of Israel, whom he hath redeemed and called, *Ye are my Witnesses, saith the Lord, Isa. xliii. 10.* They are Witnesses to his glorious Being and Perfections, against the Atheism of the World, Isa. xlii. 8. *Ye are even my Witnesses. Is there a God besides me? No, there is no God, I know not any.* They are Witnesses

Witnesses unto the Truth and Reality of the Salvation he hath wrought, against the Unbelief of the rest of the World, *Isa. xlii. 11, 12, 13. I, even I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and have saved: Therefore ye are my Witnesses, saith the Lord.* They are Witnesses unto the Glory and Excellency of this Salvation, against the Contempt the unbelieving World casts upon it. To them that believe not, Christ is a *Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence, but unto such as believe he is precious,* 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8, 9. They are Witnesses for the Holiness of God, and the Purity and Equity of his Law, against the Unholiness, Wickedness and Profanity of the World. Therefore Christ saith to to his Disciples. *Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven,* Matth. v. 6. There was never an Age wherein Christ wanted his Witnesses. When a Deluge of Profanity had overspread the whole World, Noah, a Preacher of Righteousness, bears Witness for God against them. Satan never broached an Error under the most subtle Disguise, but the Lord did also raise up some to bear Witness against it: For this End Christ's spiritual Seed must endure for ever, that there may be standing and living Witnesses for the Holiness of God, and for his Truths upon the Earth.

4thly. Christ's spiritual Seed shall endure for ever, because the Spirit is given without Measure unto their Head the Lord Jesus Christ; *the Spirit of the Lord doth rest upon him,* *Isa. xi. 2.* He is anointed with the Spirit above his Fellows, and it is for their Sakes that he is anointed, *John xvii. 19. For their Sake I sanctify myself. He received Gifts for Men, even for such as did rebel,* Psalm lxxviii.

18. The Spirit and all his Grace was given unto him, that he might beget a Seed unto himself, and cherish and nourish them till they should be perfected in Glory. The Spirit of the Lord doth rest upon the Head, and is communicated from him unto all his Members, according to that Promise, *Iſa. lix. 21. My Words that are in thy Mouth, and my Spirit which I have put within thee, shall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed's Seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* As the Lord Jesus lives in Heaven, so he must live on Earth by his Spirit in his Members, therefore his Seed shall endure for ever.

5thly. Christ's spiritual Seed endure for ever, because he hath obtained Victory over the old Serpent; the Lamb has overcome him already. Michael, the Angel of the Covenant, hath prevailed over the Dragon and his Angels. In the first Proclamation of War that was made against the Serpent and his Seed, the Victory was insured to the Seed of the Woman, *Gen. iii. 15. He shall bruise thy Head.* This Declaration of War, and the Promise of Victory made to the Seed of the Woman, was no doubt a surprising Disappointment to the malicious Designs and Expectations of the old Serpent: This Promise had its Accomplishment when our Lord Jesus suffered unto Death; then he triumphed over Principallities and Powers, and made a Shew of them openly upon his Cross; Kings of great Armies were foiled, even spiritual Wickedness in high Places; the Head of *Leviathan* was broke in Pieces by the glorious Head of the Church; and by reason of his Victory and Conquest over the Powers of Darkness, the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against his Church. This same Promise is

also accomplished every Day, in the Preservation of the Children of God in the Midst of their Enemies; and it will have its final Accomplishment, when Satan is for ever bruised under the Feet of Christ's mystical Head and Members, *Rom. xvi. 20. The God of Peace shall shortly bruise Satan under your Feet.* The exalted Head of the Church shall reign till all his Enemies are made his Footstool.

6thly. Christ's Seed shall endure for ever, that the Lord may be seen and glorified in this great Work of their Preservation. In our Text it is said, *His Seed will I make to endure for ever.* I WILL MAKE, whatever Opposition may be made to this Work of mine, whatever Adversaries they may have. O! what of God is to be seen in their Preservation, considering the Power and Multitude of their Enemies? The old Serpent, with all his Power, Malice and Cunning, is against them; the World also hateth them; they are like *the Lily among Thorns*, Song ii. 2. If you inquire what of God is to be seen in their Preservation, I answer,

First, The Sovereignty of God, even his absolute Dominion over the Works of his own Hands: *He doth in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, whatsoever seemeth good in his Sight; and he reproveth Kings for the Sake of his People, Psalm cv. 15.* yea, for their Sakes he will take their Crowns from off their Heads, and spoil them of all their Glory: He will overturn Empires and Kingdoms for them. The *Babylonish Empire* was overturned for their Cruelty against the Church and People of God, and the *Persian Empire* is raised up, that *Cyrus* might be the Instrument of the Church's Deliverance, *Isa. xlv. 1, 4.* Thus saith the Lord to his Anointed, to *Cyrus*, whose

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Right-Hand I have holden, to subdue Nations before him. For Jacob my Servant's Sake, and Israel mine Elect, I have even called thee by thy Name : I have named thee, though thou hast not known me.

2dly. The Power of God is manifested in this great Work ; he displays the Glory of his Power in setting Limits to the Fury and Rage of Devils and Men against the Church, *Psalms* xlviii. 11. His Power is seen in preserving his People in the Furnace, and delivering them out of it ; also in reviving them when they are like the dead and dry Bones scattered about the Grave's Mouth.

3dly. The Wisdom of God is also to be seen in the Preservation of Christ's spiritual Seed. Infinite Wisdom has baffled all those Projects that have been set on Foot, by Satan and his Instruments; for the Ruin of the Church, and turned them about for her farther Growth and Enlargement. The Wisdom of God hath brought Light out of the darkest Clouds, and Order out of the greatest Confusion. When the Witnesses for Christ are slain, and the Inhabitants of the Earth are rejoicing, and making merry over their Destruction, *lo the Spirit of Life from God enters into them, and they ascend up into Heaven in a Cloud, and their Enemies behold them,* *Rev.* xi. 12,

Finally, His Faithfulness is glorified in their Preservation ; his Faithfulness in accomplishing his Word of Promise, made first unto their Head the Lord Jesus : *The Lord hath sworn by his Holiness, he will not lie unto David :* Therefore the lxxxix Psalm is ushered in with a Song of the Faithfulness of God, in the first Verse, *With my Mouth will I make known thy Faithfulness to all Generations.* The Church and People of God have had Reason in all Ages

to say with the Prophet, *Great is thy Faithfulness*, Lam. iii. 23.

I proceed now to draw some Inferences from this Subject.

Infer. 1st. If it be so, that Christ's spiritual Seed shall endure for ever, hence we may see, that all Attempts whatsoever to root them out shall prove ineffectual; *The Gates of Hell shall never prevail against the Church*, Matth. xvi. 18. Yea, Jerusalem shall prove a burdensom Stone for all People: All that burden themselves with it shall be cut in Pieces, though all People of the World be gathered together against it, Zech. xii. 3. All the Attempts of the Enemies of the Church and People of God, against them, shall issue in their own Ruin and Destruction.

Secondly, If it be so, then let us turn aside with Moses, and behold with Wonder *this great Sight, a Bush burning and not consumed*. The Church has ever been in the Midst of Danger, yet behold she lives. That Day never dawned, wherein it could be said, that Christ wanted some to do Service to him; and that Day shall never dawn wherein it can be said that his Seed fails from the Earth. This is a wonderful Work of God; and, if we seriously look into it, it cannot but fill us with Wonder and Admiration. I shall offer a few Things to evidence that this is a wonderful Work of God.

1st. There has been a continued War, without a Cessation of Arms, these five thousand Years, and more, against all Christ's spiritual Seed, yet they remain. A few Years War frequently depopulates and wears out the most flourishing Countries; but here is a War that has been carried on by powerful Adversaries, by *spiritual Wickednesses in high Places, by Principalities and Powers, the Rulers of the*

the Darkneſs of this World, even by the Dragon, that old Serpent, who hath managed this War with all his Power, Policy and Skill; yet notwithstanding Chriſt's ſpiritual Seed do endure to this very Day, and ſhall endure for ever.

2dly. Conſider alſo the Enmity that is in the World againſt Chriſt's ſpiritual Seed; *They are not of the World, but choſen out of the World, therefore the World hateth them,* John xv. 19. The World are not only Enemies to them, but Enmity againſt them; they are Enmity againſt that Doctrine they believe and receive, againſt him whoſe Children they are, and againſt his bleſſed Image which they bear: This Enmity is not for a Time, or for one Age only, but it deſcends from Father to Son, from one Race to another. It is as natural for Men to hate Chriſt and his Seed, as it is for them to eat and ſleep. It is the Obſerve of one, That the human Race moves as naturally to deſtroy Chriſt's ſpiritual Seed, as it doth to preſerve its own Kind; yet, notwithstanding of this Enmity, they endure for ever.

3dly. Conſider alſo what diſmal Times have gone over the Church, what dreadful Tempeſts have beat upon her; the Floods of Profanity, Perſecution and Error have many Times ſwelled to ſuch a Height, as they have threatned to ſwallow her up, yet ſhe remains; this is a wonderful Work of God. *Thirdly,* If it be ſo, that Chriſt's ſpiritual Seed ſhall endure for ever, hence we may ſee a Bow in the darkeſt Clouds that may hang over the Church; whatever threatning Diſpenſations ſhe may be brought under, yet Chriſt's Seed ſhall endure for ever: With this the Lord's Remnant may and ought to encourage themſelves in dark and trying Times.

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I shall upon this Head mention a few dark Providences we are under at this Day, which threaten Danger to the Church of Christ, notwithstanding of which the Lord's People, who are exercised under a Sight and Sense of these Things, may draw Encouragement from this Promise in our Text, *His Seed will I make to endure for ever.*

In the *first* Place, Corruption in Principle prevails throughout all the reformed Churches. Ah! what Degeneracy is there from Reformation-Principles? The Doctrine is corrupted, the Worm-wood and Gall of Error is mingled with the Waters of the Sanctuary; the Superstition in Worship is made light of by too many; the Hedge of Government, that Christ hath set about his House, is broke down by others. We need go no farther than this Church and Land wherein we live; all the Parts of our covenanted Reformation are at this Day assaulted; the Foundations of Doctrine are undermined. Some are not afraid to call in question the supreme Deity and necessary Existence of the blessed God our Saviour. Superstition in Worship abounds through the Land. The Foundations of Government are overturned by others, who, under fair Shews and Pretences, are reviving the old exploded Sectarian Schemes: All these Things are against Christ's spiritual Seed; yet this Promise in our Text is a Bow in the Cloud, *His Seed will I make to endure for ever.*

2dly. There is an universal Degeneracy at this Time from the Power and Life of Religion. May it not be said of all the reformed Churches, that the Charge given against the Church of *Ephesus* may be too justly applied to them, *Rev. ii. 5. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first Love. A Form and Shadow is*
come

come in instead of the Life, Power and Substance of Religion and Godliness ; and amongst us our primitive Love and Zeal are much decayed, *and the Things that remain are ready to die* ; yet, Have we not Ground to believe, that because the Head of the Church lives, she shall live also ? And altho' the Church should be like the dry Bones scattered about the Grave's Mouth, yet she shall be revived through the Death and Resurrection of her living and exalted Head, *Isa. xxvi. 19. Thy dead Men shall live, together with my dead Body shall they arise : Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust.*

3dly. Corruption in Practice prevails exceedingly in this degenerate Day. Many have no Profession of Religion at all ; many that have a Profession of Religion are a Reproach unto their Profession. How unlike unto the Christian Name are many who are called *Christians* ? Sins of all Kinds abound both against the first and second Table of the Law. A Conversation like the Gospel is a rare Thing. Many profess to look out for Heaven, and hope to be there, yet they are Strangers to a Conversation in Heaven ; the most Part *seek themselves*, their own Things, and *few the Things of Christ*. May we not say with the Apostle, that the Walk of many discovers that *they are the Enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose End is Destruction, whose God is their Belly, and whose Glory in is their Shame, who mind earthly Things*. This Degeneracy in Practice is very threatening unto the Churches of Christ ; but yet he who has preserved a People unto himself, under the overflowing Floods of Profanity and Wickedness, will still preserve a Remnant. There is one Thing here I would have you to beware of, when you see the Walk of Professors unlike their Profession, blame not the holy Religion that they

they profess; or, when you see the Conduct and Behaviour of any amongst us, unlike that pure Worship, and beautiful Order and Government that Christ has instituted in his House, blame not the Ordinances of Christ; lay the Blame where it should be laid, even upon the Corruptions of Men.

4^{thly}. The spiritual Glory is very much departed from all the Churches of Christ at this Day; the Purity of the Ordinances, and the special Presence of the Lord in the Ordinances of his own Institution and Appointment, is the Glory of the Church; *Zion's God is her Glory, Isa. lx. 19.* And when the Lord withdraws his gracious Presence from his own Ordinances, then it may be said that the spiritual Glory is removed. And may we not say, that there is a great Withdrawing of the divine Presence from his own Ordinances amongst his Church and People? Is it not so with a Witness amongst us? Where is that convincing, converting, or confirming Power that sometimes has accompanied the Ordinances of the Gospel? May we not see *Ichabod* written upon our Assemblies, and written upon all our Solemnities? Is not the Hope of *Israel* like a Stranger, like a way-faring Man in all the Churches? But will he altogether leave his People, and cast off his Inheritance? No, he will not, *Psalms xciv. 14.* Look out therefore for his Coming, and live in the Faith and Expectation of his Return to his Churches; *He will arise, and have Mercy upon Zion; the Time to favour her, yea, the set Time will come, Psalm cii. 13.*

5^{thly}. Lukewarmness and Indifferency under all these Evils is very epidemick at this Day. *Laodicea's Disease* prevails, and it is both a dreadful Plague and Sin, *Rev. iii. 16. Thou art lukewarm, neither*

neither cold nor hot. O ! how unconcerned are many though the Doctrine of the Lord's House be corrupted ? How indifferent are others though the Government of his House be trampled upon ? It is the Sin of not a few, that they are like *Ephraim*, a *Cake unturned*, cold upwards towards God and the Things of God, and warm towards the Earth and their own Things. But though we should not be concerned for the Truths of Christ, yet he will not want his Witnesses ; he will have a Seed to do Service to him, and to bear Testimony unto his controverted and despised Truths.

4thly. If it be so, that Christ's Seed shall endure for ever, O then contribute your Endeavours towards the preserving of a spiritual Seed to the Lord Jesus. The Promise doth not exclude the Use of Means on your Part, but ought to quicken and encourage you to use all proper Means incumbent upon you towards this great End. And, in the *first* Place, let me exhort every one of you to be fervent in Prayer, that the Lord Christ may have a Seed to do Service to him: This is a Mean that every Christian ought to use ; this is a Mean, as we have told you, that the Church and People of God have used with good Success when they have been brought low. The low State of the reformed Churches at this Time, and all the Providences of God towards them, call aloud for this Exercise ; pray then importunately that the Lord may revive his own Work in the Midst of the Year, that he may return to his Churches, that his Work and Power may appear amongst them, and that his Glory may yet be seen in them ; pray that he may vindicate his own Truths from the Reproach and Contempt that the Adversaries are throwing upon them ; pray that Peace and Truth

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may

may be within *Jerusalem's* Walls, and then may we hope that Prosperity shall be within her Palaces. *2dly.* Let me exhort you all, and every one in your several Stations, to exert yourselves for advancing the Kingdom of real Religion and Godliness : Let such as are Magistrates employ their Power and Authority for this End ; and let such as are in a more private Station walk so as they may commend Christ and his Truths unto the Consciences of others ; this may be a Mean of Establishment unto the Weak, and also of Conviction and Conversion to such as are Strangers unto Christ. *Finally,* Be careful to transmit the Truths of Christ in their Purity to the rising Generation : We in this Church and Land have pure Principles of Doctrine delivered to us in our excellent Confession of Faith, larger and shorter Catechisms, all drawn from that pure Fountain of Truth, the Holy Scriptures. We have pure Ordinances of Worship, and a Government established in Christ's House according the Pattern shewn on the Mount : Let the rising Generation be informed and instructed in these Principles ; yea, let it be told to Posterity, that these three Lands, and *Scotland* many Times, have lifted up their Hands and sworn to the Lord, to preserve and maintain the pure Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of Christ's House ; and that no Person or Persons on Earth can dissolve the Obligation of the Oath of God. Truth is a sacred Trust committed to us to be kept for the Sake of Generations to come ; it is the most valuable Treasure we can leave behind us unto our Children ; it is the indispensable Duty of one Generation to deliver this precious Trust safe and uncorrupted to another ; yea, to shew unto them the Praises of the Lord, his Strength,

and

and his wonderful Works that he hath done, that the Generations to come may know them, and that the Children yet to be born may arise and declare them to their Children, that they may set their Hope in God, and not forget the Works of the Lord, but keep his Commandments, *Pſalm* lxxviii. 6, 7. Honest and faithful Endeavours of this Kind are an excellent Mean to preserve a spiritual Seed unto the Lord Jesus. Now, may the City of the Lord flourish, and may her Citizens abound in Number like the Grass upon the Earth: Let his Name endure for ever, and his Memorial to all Generations; and let the whole Earth be filled with his Glory. *Amen* and *Amen*.

F I N I S.



7 AP 53

The WATCHMAN'S DUTY
and DESIRE,

O R,

The PRAYER of faithful Ministers for the Lord's Beauty on his Church, and Success in their Work.

A
SERMON

Preached at the Opening of the Synod, of *Perth* and *Stirling*, at *Perth*, April 11. 1727.

By the late REVEREND and LEARNED Mr. WILLIAM WILSON Minister of the Gospel at PERTH.

Printed from his own original Manuscript.

E D I N B U R G H,

Printed for David Duncan, and sold at his House, opposite to the Weigh-House, North-Side of the Street. MDCCLVII.



PSALM XC. 17.

And let the Beauty of the Lord be upon us; and establish thou the Work of our Hands upon us, yea, the Work of our Hands establish thou it.

TH E Title and Inscription of this *Psalm* bears, that *Moses* the Man of God is the Penman thereof. This Epithet, *Man of God*, is frequently given to the Prophets under the Old Testament, and sometimes to the Ministers of the Church under the New Testament, as 2 *Tim.* iii. 16, 17. *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, Reproof, &c. that the Man of God may be perfect.* 1 *Tim.* vi. 11. *But thou, O Man of God, flee these Things.* *Moses* was called of God to take the Charge and Oversight of the Church in the Wilderness: God set him apart for this great Trust, and furnished him eminently for it: And the Spirit of God gives him this honourable Testimony, *That as a Servant he was faithful in all God's House,* Heb. iii. 5. Here we may observe, that it becomes all that sit in *Moses's* Chair to imitate him in Faithfulness, and in the whole of their Deportment to shew themselves to be Men of God, as we heard, the last Occasion of this Nature, from the forecited 1 *Tim.* vi. 11.

This *Psalm* is a Prayer of *Moses*, wherein he bewails the Calamities that beset the Church and People

People of God in the Wilderness, and withal comforts them under their present Miseries and Troubles, and also fervently prays that the Tokens of divine Displeasure might be removed, that the Lord may return with Mercy unto his People, 13 & 14 *Verses*; and that he may build up his Church, and glorify himself in their Sight, and in the Sight of their Posterity after them, 16 *Verse*. *Moses* was a Man of Prayer; he many Times stood in the Breach, and turned away Wrath from this People, and prayed down Blessings upon them. Here again we may observe, that all the Church-Ministers are not only called to go for God, and from him, to their People, but it belongs also unto them, by their Office, to go from their People, and for them, unto God, and to be importunate with him for Blessings upon them: Therefore I hope it will not be unsuitable to discourse, on this Occasion, upon a Prayer of *Moses*, the Man of God, for the Church; a Pattern worthy to be imitated by every one, but especially by such, who, in regard of their Office, bear the honourable Character of Men of God: It is the last Verse of this *Psalms* I am to discourse upon, which contains the Conclusion of *Moses's* Prayer, and in it we have two very comprehensive Petitions: The first whereof is, *And let the Beauty of the Lord our God be upon us*. Where we may notice, first, the Blessing prayed for, and that is the Beauty of the Lord. The original Word is by some rendred *Pleasantness*: Let the Pleasantness of the Lord be upon us; let us enjoy that which will make us pleasant in his Sight, that wherein he delights and takes Pleasure. But I shall keep by the Phrase our Translators use, being as agreeable to the Original as any other. The Beauty here prayed for is called the Beauty of the Lord. The Church is Christ's
spiritual

spiritual House, his spiritual Kingdom; all her Beauty is spiritual, and it consists in her Conformity unto Jesus her Head and Lord : It is a Beauty derived from him ; it is a Beam of his own Glory from the God of Glory shining upon her, *Isa. lx. 1. The Glory of the Lord shall lighten thee.* On these Accounts the Beauty here prayed for may be called the Beauty of the Lord.

2dly. We may observe for whom this Blessing is desired : *Upon us*, thy Church and People in the Wilderness. The Church of *Israel* in the Wilderness was a lively Emblem of the Church militant in all succeeding Generations. Though the Church, while here, is still in the Wilderness, still in a militant State and Condition, yet, when the Beauty of the Lord is upon her, there is such a Splendor and Glory about her, as doth distinguish her from all the rest of the World beside.

3dly. The Church's Relation to God is here asserted : *Our God.* This People in the Wilderness were separate from the rest of the Nations ; God had brought them within the Bond of his Covenant, and taken them for his peculiar People. A View of the Church's Relation to the Lord Jesus, her Head and Husband, may give Strength and Courage, Life and Vigour, to the Faith of his Servants and People in Prayer.

The second Petition of *Moses*, in my Text, is, *Establish thou the Works of our Hands upon us.* Where, first, we may notice something implied, namely, their Hands were at Work, they were not idle : *Moses* especially, and others with him, whom God employed in carrying on and advancing his own Work in the Church, they prayed, and joined Diligence with their Prayer ; they exerted themselves

as

as became his Servants and Instruments in building up the Church in the Wilderness.

2dly. We may here likewise observe what is prayed for, *namely*, That the Lord may establish the Work of their Hands. The Word rendred *establish*, is sometimes rendred to direct or order, as *Psalm xxxvii. 23. A good Man's Steps are ordered by the Lord.* Direct or order the Works of our Hands; that is, direct us to such Measures as may most tend to thy Glory, and the Good of thy Church and People: But the Word is usually rendred to establish or confirm; and two Things may be imported in it. *First*, When *Moses* prays that God may establish the Work of their Hands, it is a Prayer for divine Assistance in the Work; as if he had said, Lord, put to thy own Hands to thy Work in our Hands, or, Hold thy Hands about our Hands, assist and strengthen us in the Work. When the Under-Workers are furnished and strengthened by the Lord for the Work, then the Work goes on more pleasantly. Again, *2dly*. It is a Prayer that the Lord may append his Seal to his own Work amongst their Hands. When the Lord crowns the Labours of his Servants with Success, then he shews that he is in them, and with them of a Truth. This is his Seal to the Work of their Hands; and when he thus seals the Work, then the Work of their Hands may be said to be established. I shall take in both these, *namely*, Success and Assistance, as imported in this Prayer, in the Doctrine I am to offer from it.

3dly. We may here likewise observe the doubling of the Petition, *Establish thou the Work of our Hands, yea, the Work of our Hands establish thou it.* This imports the Sense they had of the great Necessity of the Lord's putting his Hand to the Work, by

strengthening

strengthening their Hands, and making the Work successful ; as also their ardent and fervent Impor-
tunity for it. From the Words, thus opened up, I
offer the two following Doctrines.

DOCT. I. *That it is much to be desired by all, but especially by the Church's Watchmen and Overseers, that the Beauty of the Lord may be upon his Church and People.*

DOCT. II. *That such whom God employs in carrying on his own Work, should be importunate with him for Assistance and Success from him.*

DOCT. I. *That it is much to be desired by all, but especially by the Church's Watchmen and Overseers, that the Beauty of the Lord may be upon the Church.* This is the Prayer of Moses, the Man of God, for the Church and People of God, and in their Name, *Let the Beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.* Here I will endeavour to speak a little of this Beauty of the Lord, which is so much to be desired. 2dly. I will shew that it is the Duty, in a special Manner, of the Church's Watchmen, to be concerned that the Beauty of the Lord may be upon the Church. 3dly. I shall offer a Word by Way of practical Use.

i. What is this Beauty of the Lord, which is so much to be desired upon the Church ?

I answer, There are three Things that contribute to the Church's Beauty, to wit, *Purity, Power and Unity* : All these three are much to be desired, and where they are the Beauty of the Lord may be said to be upon that Church.

1st. There is the *Beauty of Purity*. The Church's Purity doth consist in the Conformity of her Doctrines, Worship, Government and Discipline, unto the Word of God ; when every Thing is done in the Church according to the Pattern shewn in the

the Mount, as the Lord commanded *Moses*; *Exod.* xxv. 40. The Doctrine of the Church is pure, when it is all drawn from that pure Fountain of Truth, the lively Oracles of God: *To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them, Isa.* viii. 20. Her Ordinances of Worship are pure, when they are such as God hath commanded or warranted in his Word, without any Mixture of human Additions or Inventions, which the Lord Jesus condemns as vain Will-Worship, *Matth.* xv. 9. *In vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.* The Church's Discipline is pure, when her Censures are such as God hath appointed in his Word; and truly these are all spiritual, *For the Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, 2 Cor.* x. 4. The Church's Government is pure, when she is governed by such Officers as Christ hath appointed in his Word, and also by such as he himself hath instituted, every one of them acting in a regular Subordination to one another, and all of them in Subordination to the Lord Jesus, the only Head, King, and Lord of his House, on whose Shoulder the Government is laid, *Isa.* ix. 6.

2dly. The Beauty of Power is much to be desired likewise. In the Verse preceeding our Text *Moses* prays, *O let thy Work and Power appear before thy Servants, and shew thy Glory to their Children.* This *David* desired to see, even the Power and Glory of God in the Sanctuary, *Psal.* lxxiii. 2. The Beauty of divine Power consists in the special Presence of the Lord in the Church with the Ordinances of his own Institution and Appointment. God is said to shine out of the Church, *Psal.* l. 2. *Out of Zion God hath shined:* This imports his special Residence in *Zion*; yea, the Church is the Hill where

where he desires to dwell, *Psalms* lxxviii. 10. The Church is his Rest, *Psalms* cxxxii. 14. *This is my Rest for ever : Here will I dwell, for I have desired it.* God is said to be in the Midst of her, *Psalms* xlvi. 5. In the Midst of her, in her Bowels, so the original Word signifies ; he is her Life, her Soul. The Lord in the Midst of her is her Beauty and Excellency : The Church, and all the Ordinances thereof, is like a Body without Life or Soul, when the divine Presence is not in her ; but when divine Power is exerted with the preaching of the Word, and other Ordinances of Worship, then the Weapons of our Ministerial Warfare are seen to be mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong Holds, *2 Cor.* x. 4. Then through the Greatness of his Power his Enemies are constrained to bow, *Psalms* lxvi. 3. There may be some Measure of Purity where there is little Power ; but it will be found that these two go frequently together. When the Church loseth the Beauty of Purity, the Beauty of Power will quickly depart ; and when the Beauty of Power departs, the Beauty of Purity will not long subsist.

3dly. The *Beauty of Unity* is much to be desired also. The Spirit of God commends it as good and pleasant for the Members of the Church to dwell together in Unity, *Psalms* cxxxii. 1. *Behold how good and how pleasant is it for Brethren to dwell together in Unity. How pleasant ; it is the same Word which in our Text is rendered Beauty.* The Church's Unity consists in Harmony in Doctrine and Practice amongst her Members ; when they all, and especially her Watchmen, *Speak the same Things*, and are knit together in Love and Affection to one another, then the Beauty of Unity may be said to be upon the Church. Purity and Power must needs concur to the Beauty of Unity and Harmony ; unless

less Unity have Purity for its Basis and Foundation, the Beauty of the Lord is not in it : And if the Beauty of Power depart from a Church, Unity upon the Basis of Truth will not long remain. When the Lord departs from a People, he takes his Peace away with him, and then a perverse Spirit is mingled amongst them.

The *second* Thing I propose, upon this Doctrine, is, To shew that it is the Duty of the Church's Watchmen, in a special Manner, to be concerned that the Beauty of the Lord may be upon the Church. No doubt all the Members of the Church should pray, *Let the Beauty of the Lord our God be upon us* : But it is incumbent, in a special Manner, upon the Church's Overseers, to be concerned that this spiritual Beauty may be upon the Church ; to this they are specially obliged by virtue of their Office, and on the Account of the Trust, with respect to the Church's Beauty, committed to them. This will appear, if we consider the following Things.

1st. With respect to the Purity of the Ordinances of divine Institution, there is a special Charge given to the Church's Watchmen, that the Church receive no Spot upon her Doctrine, her Worship, or Government ; if she receive any Damage through their Fault, this will be required at their Hands. The Church of *Philadelphia* is commended for her Purity, *Rev. iii. 10. Thou hast kept the Word of my Patience.* She had some Measure of the divine Presence with her too, *Verse 8. I have set before thee an open Door, and no Man can shut it ; for thou hast a little Strength, and hast kept my Word.* She is the Church that amongst all the seven has the fairest Character, and the largest Commendation. Purity, with some Measure of the divine Presence, was her Beauty, Crown

Crown and Glory. And what is Christ's Charge to the Angel of that Church, or her Watchmen and Overseers? We have it in the 11th Verse, *Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no Man take thy Crown.*

2dly. With respect to the Beauty of Power, though Ministers cannot command the Wind of the Spirit to blow, (the Lord is sovereign, and comes and goes, with respect to his special and gracious Presence, as he pleaseth) yet it is incumbent upon them, and that in a more special Manner, to cry. And let the Beauty of divine Power be upon us, if we consider them, 1st. As the Lord's Remembrancers in behalf of the Church; 2dly. As they are the Church's Watchmen. 1st. If we consider them as they are the Lord's Remembrancers in behalf of the Church, it is incumbent upon them to put him in Remembrance of his Church, and to plead with him on her Behalf, *Isa. lxii. 7, 8. I have set Watchmen upon thy Walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their Peace Day nor Night. Ye that make Mention of the Lord, keep not Silence, and give him no Rest, till he establish and make Jerusalem a Praise in the Earth. Ye that make Mention of the Lord; in the Margin it is rendred, Ye that are the Lord's Remembrancers.* And who are these? No doubt all the People of God may be called his *Remembrancers*, but surely Ministers are such in a special Manner: They are such by virtue of their Office, and it belongs to them, above others, to cry, *Remember thy Congregation which thou hast purchased of old, &c. Psalm lxxiv. 2.* 2dly. If we consider Ministers as they are the Church's Watchmen, it belongs to them, in a special Manner, to be concerned that the Beauty of the divine Presence may be upon the Church. This will appear if we notice two Things that are
incum-

incumbent upon them as they are the Church's Watchmen: 1st. It belongs to them to watch against those Evils that may provoke the Lord to remove the Beauty of his gracious Presence from his Church: They ought carefully to observe these Corruptions, whether in Principle or Practice, which may sin away the divine Presence: It belongs to their Office to shew unto the Lord's People *their Sins, to the House of Jacob their Transgressions*, Isa. lviii. 2. 2^{dly}. As they are Watchmen they should notice the Departure of the spiritual Glory; and to stir up themselves and the Church to use all proper Means for recovering the divine Presence, when it is in any Measure removed. When the Bridegroom departs, it becomes the Children of the Bride-Chamber to fast and mourn, *Matth. ix. 15*. When the Lord removes his gracious Presence in any Measure, it becomes the Ministers of the Sanctuary to stand and *weep between the Porch and the Altar, and to cry, Spare thy People, O Lord, and give not thine Heritage to Reproach*, Joel ii. 17.

3^{dly}. With respect to the Beauty of Unity and Harmony, it is incumbent upon the Church's Watchmen to maintain it where it is, to endeavour to recover it when in any Measure it is lost. The Gospel they preach is the Gospel of Peace; the Embassy upon which they are sent is a Message of Peace. If all the Members of the Church should *keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, Eph. iv. 3. much more they who by Office are the Ministers of Peace.

I now proceed to make some practical Use of this Doctrine; and all the Use I make of it shall be by Way of Exhortation.

If it be so, that it is much to be desired by all, but especially by the Church's Watchmen, that the Beauty of the Lord may be upon the Church, then this Doctrine serves to exhort every one of us, especially such of us as are by Office the Church's Overseers, to join Issue with the Man of God, in the Words of my Text, and to pray, *Let the Beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.* I shall offer a few Considerations which should move and excite us to this Exercise, and then subjoin a few Things incumbent upon us, who are the Church's Watchmen, with reference to this.

1st. I shall offer a few Things which should move us to be concerned that the Beauty of the Lord may be upon us.

1st. Let us consider the Church has no Beauty at all, if the Beauty of the Lord be not upon her. The Church's Unity and Purity, with the divine Presence in the Midst of her, are the Things that not only distinguish this Society from all others, but exalt the Church above the rest of the World beside. The Church is a high Hill, as *the Hill of Baihan, Psalm lxxviii. 15.* and in the 16th Verse, *Why leap ye, ye high Hills ? This is the Hill which God desireth to dwell in, yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.* The least Deviation from Truth, when it becomes universal, is a black Spot upon a Church ; when the Beauty of Power departs, black Formality covers the Church : Whatever Flourish of a Profession there may be, yet that Church is like a dead Carcase in the Lord's Sight, as the Church of Sardis was, *Rev. iii. 1.* Again, when Purity and Power are altogether lost, that Church has no Beauty at all, she is no more the Spouse of Christ, but Satan's Synagogue, as the Church of Rome at this Day is.

2^{dly}.

2dly. Let us consider that the Beauty of the Lord upon the Church makes her beautiful indeed; she is then an eternal Excellency, the Joy of many Generations, *Isa. lx. 15.* Her Beauty is then a real Beauty; she is beautiful in her Lord and in Husband's Eyes, he takes Delight and Pleasure in her; she is then a Crown of Glory in the Hand of the Lord, a royal Diadem in the Hand of her God; she is then his *Hephzibah* and *Beba*, delighted in and married to the Lord, *Isa. lxii. 4.* Her Beauty is then a most excellent Beauty; she is then beautiful as *Tirza*, comely as *Jerusalem*: *She looketh forth as the Morning, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun, Song vi. 4. 10.* All worldly Beauty and Glory cannot then be compared with the Church's Beauty, yea, the Splendor and Lustre of the greatest and most glorious Kingdoms of this Earth, are but like a Bubble unto that Splendor and Glory that is upon the Church. When the Glory of the Lord riseth upon the Church, *Zion* is then the Perfection of Beauty, *Psalms l. 2. Out of Zion the Perfection of Beauty, God hath shined.* Again, when the Beauty of the Lord is upon the Church, her Beauty is an astonishing Beauty; her Enemies are struck with Astonishment, yea, sometimes with Terror, at the spiritual Lustre and Splendor that is seen upon her, *Psalms xlviii. 2. Beautiful for Situation is Mount Zion. Verses 4. 5. 6. The Kings were assembled, they saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away. Fear took hold upon them there.* Yea, finally, when the Beauty of the Lord is upon the Church, then her Beauty is an alluring Beauty; others are engaged to come and join themselves to this beautiful and lovely Society, *Isa. lx. 1, 3. Arise, shine, for thy Light is come, the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.* Ob-
serve

serve what follows in the 3d Verse, *And the Gentiles shall come to thy Light, and Kings to the Brightness of thy Rising.*

3dly. Consider, when the Beauty of the Lord is upon the Church, the Lord Jesus is therein greatly honoured and glorified; then the gathering of the People is unto *Sbilsb*; then the Flocks of *Kedar* are gathered unto him, the Rams of *Nebajoth* do minister unto him, they come up with Acceptance upon his Altar, and glorify the House of his Glory; they fly as a Cloud, and as Doves to their Windows, *Isa.* lx. 7, 8. Yea, the whole of that Chapter is a Prophecy of the Beauty of the New Testament Church, and the Glory that shall redound to her Head the Lord Jesus thereby.

4thly. When the Beauty of Purity, Power and Unity, is upon the Church, then there is a special Lustre and Splendor upon the Members of the Church, both Ministers and People: They have a Lustre of Heaven about them, they appear like the Children of the King. The Church's Seed is then known among the Gentiles, and her Offspring among the People: All that see them acknowledge that they are the Seed which the Lord has blessed, *Isa.* lxi. 9. When the Beauty of the Lord is upon the Church, her Members appear in the Beauty of Holiness, *Psalms* cx. 3. *In the Beauty of Holiness from the Womb of the Menring: Thou hast the Dew of thy Youth.* There is then a sweet Savour of Christ about them, *Hos.* iv. 5. *I will be as the Dew to Israel.* And then, in the 6th Verse, *His Beauty shall be as the Olive-Tree, his Smell as Lebanon.* If the Church has no Beauty at all, except the Beauty of the Lord be upon her, if this makes her beautiful indeed, and honours the Lord Jesus, and puts a Lustre and Splendor upon all her Members, these Things

Things should move us to cry, and let the Beauty of the Lord be upon us. I shall add two Things more upon this Head.

5thly. The spiritual Beauty is very much departed from the reformed Churches, and there are many Symptoms and Evidences of a Departure of the spiritual Beauty from us. If we look abroad to the reformed Churches, Have not the most Part of them lost much of the Beauty of Purity and Power too ; Error in Doctrine, and Corruption in Practice, seem to prevail every where. The Ordinances of Worship are corrupted, the spiritual Worship and Government of Christ's House is quite marred in many of them. As for Instance, in our neighbouring Churches of *England* and *Ireland*, though their doctrinal Articles bear some Measure of Conformity to the Word of God, yet, thro' a lordly Prelacy, a carnal Discipline and human Ordinances of Worship, the Beauty of Christ's House is very much defaced amongst them, and gross Ignorance, Immorality and Profanity are the Fruits of this amongst their People. Again, with respect to ourselves, our Standards of Doctrine are pure, our Ordinances of Worship, our Rules for Discipline and Government, we hope, bear a Conformity to the divine Pattern : Thus far we enjoy as yet some Measure of the Beauty of Purity ; yet, alas, we may say, our spiritual Beauty is very much departed from us. What Heart breaking Divisions, Animosities and Differences have been amongst us ? The Staves of Beauty and Bands have been broke asunder : for the Divisions of our *Reuben* there may be Searchings of Heart. Again, how little of the Power of Religion is to be found amongst us ? Our Exercise bears not a Proportion to our Profession ; the Life of Religion lies a-bleeding, ready to expire in our

Streets

Streets ; that Vigour of Faith and Love, that sometime has appeared, is very much abated. It was a seasonable Warning given us from this Place upon an Occasion of the like Nature not long ago, from Rev. ii. 5. *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first Love.* Ah ! where is that Lustre and Splendor of Holiness that should be, and sometimes has been the distinguishing Glory of Ministers and People ? Nay, may we not, in the Words of the Spirit of God by the Prophet, bewail, Lam. iv. 7, 8. *Her Nazarites were purer than Snow, they were whiter than Milk, they were more ruddy in their Body than Rubies, their polishing was of Sapphire: Their Visage is blacker than a Coal : They are not known in the Streets : Their Skin cleaveth to their Bones: It is withered, it is become like a Stick ?* These and many such Evidences may be offered, that our spiritual Beauty is much departed from us.

Finally, The Departure of the spiritual Beauty is a Forerunner of sad Calamities. When the Beauty either of *Purity, Power, or Unity*, departs from a Church, it is an Evidence that the Lord is on his Way, if not to unchurch that People, yet to punish them. It is remarkable in the 9th of *Ezekiel*, before the Commission is given to the Men with the Slaughter-Weapons in their Hands, to go through the Midst of the City, and to slay utterly Old and Young, in the 3d Verse, the Glory departs from the Cherub to the Threshold of the House. The Departure of the spiritual Glory goes before a Day of Destruction and Desolation : Ought not these Things to move us to a Concern that the Beauty of the Lord may be upon us ?

I shall shut up this Doctrine by laying before you a few Things in a special Manner incumbent upon us who are the Church's Watchmen and

Overseers. We ought not only to pray that the Beauty of the Lord may be upon the Church, but our utmost Endeavours must be used to maintain any Thing of the Beauty of the Lord that is upon us, and to recover any Measure of spiritual Beauty that is wanting; and for this End let us beware of every Thing that may marr the Church's Beauty; more particularly,

First, It is incumbent upon us to beware of every Thing that may marr the *Beauty of Purity*: We ought to keep pure and intire the Ordinances of divine Institution and Appointment, the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government of Christ's House; these, I say, should be kept pure by us, and transmitted pure to our Posterity, that our Children after us may see the Glory of the Lord. We have excellent Catechisms, both Larger and Shorter; an excellent Confession of Faith, for which we desire to bless the Lord, tho' Confessions are now boldly cried down by some in *England*, and others in *Ireland*, (of whom better Things might have been expected) as human and tyrannical Impositions upon the Consciences of Men. But what tho' our Standards of Doctrine be pure? If we do not preach the Word of God purely, the Church's Beauty will be marred by us; it is our unquestionable Duty to hold fast the Form of sound Words, *2 Tim. 1. 13.* The beaten Path, wherein the way-faring Men before us have walked, is the safest. Again, it is not enough that we have pure Ordinances of Worship, unless Spirituality in Worship be maintained. If Ministers turn flat and dead in the Duties of publick Worship, their People are in Hazard thereby to be hardend; a lifeless and carnal Way of serving the living God opened a Door for all these Popish Cerimonies that have been

been a Plague upon the Christian Church. When Men once lost the Spirituality of Worship (as the judicious Dr. *Owen* observes) they behoved to have something to fill their natural Eyes, and gratify their carnal Senses : Hence all those gaudy Cerimonies, which Men have desired as Ornaments unto the Worship of God, were introduced into the Church : And what are they all but an Abomination in the Sight of God, and of no other Use but to divert Mens Minds from the Spirituality of Worship, and to make them please themselves with an empty outward Form of Godliness ? Yea, farther, it is not enough that we have good Rules for Discipline, unless our Discipline be managed in a spiritual Manner, for reaching its spiritual Ends, *namely*, the Conviction and Recovery of such as have fallen. Some of us have Occasion to observe, in Places where gross Scandals do much abound, that it is very rare to see any satisfying Evidences of serious Repentance amongst them that fall. Surely it becomes us, who are the Church's Overseers, both Ministers and Elders, seriously to inquire how we manage the spiritual Sword, lest their Obduration and Hardness be imputable to some culpable Defect in us. *Finally*, With respect to the Government of the Church, we have such Office-Bearers as Christ hath appointed in his House, *namely*, the Elder who labours in Word and Doctrine, the Elder who rules, the Deacon who takes Care of the poor Members of the Church ; we have also such Courts as Christ hath established in the Church, Sessions, Presbyteries, provincial Synods, and national Assemblies ; it is incumbent upon us to preserve this Government pure and intire. Sessions are subordinate to Presbyteries, and are accountable to them for all their sessional Manage-
ments

ments whatsoever, as Presbyteries are to provincial Synods, and they to the national Assembly; and, if the State of the Church did allow of oecumenical Assemblies, national Assemblies would owe Subjection to them. This is that beautiful Order that Christ hath instituted in his House. I may here farther observe, that, in order to our preserving the Government pure, it is needful we commit the Government of the Church to faithful Men, yea, the Purity of Doctrine, Worship and Discipline, as well as that of the Government, are here nearly concerned: Nothing can more endanger the Church's Beauty than corrupt Office-Bearers, and it has been found that a corrupt Ministry has ever been the Ruin of the Church; therefore it is incumbent upon us, that we take heed *whom* we receive into the Ministry, and also *how* we receive Men into the Ministry; I say, it belongs to us to look well *whom* we receive into the Ministry, that they be such, who, so far as we can discern, have some Feeling and Experience of a Work of God upon their own Hearts, and who seek into the Ministry, not merely to obtain a Livelyhood, or to make a Trade of Preaching, but who have higher and more noble Ends before them, even the Glory of Christ, and the Salvation of others. Also we should look well *how* we receive them into the Ministry, *namely*, that they be taken in in that Way and Manner that Christ has appointed his Ministers to be set over his Church, that they be received by that Door at which Christ will have all his Ministers to enter; I mean, at the Door of a regular Election and Call. To impose and force a Minister upon a Christian People, is to exercise a Lordship and tyrannical Dominion over the Heritage of Christ.

adly. Let us take heed that we marr not the Beauty of Power. We should be careful lest the divine Presence be removed from us thro' our Sin. For this End, in the *first* Place, a faithful Application of Doctrine is needful on our Part. God has promised his Presence to his Ministers, yet we cannot expect the divine Presence but in a faithful Discharge of our Duty. What the Spirit of God speaks by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, concerning the Prophets of that Time, is remarkable, *Jer. xxiii. 22. If they had stood in my Council, and had caused my People to hear my Words, then should they have turned them from their evil Way, and from the Evil of their Doings*; intimating to us, that the Sermons or Preachings of these Prophets had not Success, and that because they were not faithful in their Doctrine. If we would have the Presence of the Lord with us in our Preachings, it becomes us to address ourselves to the Consciences of our Hearers; closely to attack the strong Holds of their natural Corruption, to discover particularly their Sin and Misery by their Apostasy from God in the first *Adam*, and the Help that is for them in the Lord Jesus the second *Adam*; their Ruin by the Breach of their first Covenant, and the only Remedy from this Ruin by the Covenant of Grace: We ought to preach the Necessity of a vital Union with Christ Jesus, without which we can have no Communion with him here, and if we have no Communion with him in Grace here, we shall have none with him in Glory hereafter: Him we must exhibit as the only beautiful Foundation that is laid in *Zion*, as the precious and chief Corner-Stone; towards him must all our Preachings point, as the Lord our Righteousness and Strength, otherways there will be little Beauty and Glory in them; to him we must lead our Hearers for Righteousness unto their

their Justification, and for the Spirit, in order to the beginning, carrying on, and compleating of a Work of Sanctification : But who is sufficient for these Things ? Yet our Sufficiency is of God. 2dly. If we would not mar the Beauty of the divine Presence, we should endeavour to walk as we preach. Though we should preach faithfully, if our Conversation be not like our Preaching, we may sin away the Presence of the Lord from our Ministry. It is not enough that we commend Christ in our Doctrine, we should endeavour to have a Savour of him about us in our Walk. It is not enough that we preach up the Necessity and Excellency of Holiness, (which indeed all Ministers should do) but we must also endeavour to have the Beauty of Holiness upon ourselves, otherways we will both stumble, and harden our People. All of us should follow the Example of the Apostle, who could say to the *Thessalonians*, *1 Thess. ii. 10. Ye know how holily, how justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves amongst you.*

3dly. Let us take heed that we mar not the Beauty of Unity and Harmony. Brotherly Love adorns Church-Members, and especially Ministers of the Gospel ; Heart-Risings at one another, groundless Jealousies, and striving about Words when there is an Agreement in the Substance, from whence springs Envy, Malice, Railings and evil Surmisings, *1 Tim. iv. 6.* these do all mar the Beauty of Unity. The Command of God, by the Apostle, should be regarded by all, but especially by the Church's Overseers, *Rom. xlv. 19. Let us therefore follow after the Things which make for Peace, and Things wherewith one may edify another.* I may here add, that all such as bear Office in the Church, are solemnly engaged, when set apart to their Office, to

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use their utmost Endeavours to maintain the Beauty of Purity and Unity, and to obtain the Beauty of Power; yea, this whole Church and Nation are under the most solemn Engagements to maintain the beautiful Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government of Christ's House, Unity in the Lord amongst ourselves, and to pursue after the Life and Power of Religion and Godliness. This is what is chiefly intended in our national Covenants, which were the Honour of our Land, and a Fruit and Evidence of the Beauty of the Lord upon us, tho' they have been contemned in the several Periods of this Church, by Men of different Denominations, from different and often contrary Views.

I proceed to the *second* Petition of the Man of God in my Text, *The Work of our Hands establish thou it*; and a second Doctrine from the Verse, which is, *That such whom God employs in his Work should be importunate with him for Assistance and Success in it.* All I intend upon this Doctrine is, in the *first* Place, briefly to speak of the Work the Church's Watchmen are employed in; and then, *2dly.* to shew why they should be importunate with him; and, *3dly.* to offer a Word by Way of practical Use.

1st. What is the Work that the Church's Watchmen are employed in? I answer, There is a twofold Work that they are mainly employed in, to wit. the Work of Gathering in, and the Work of Building up the Church. To gather in Sinners to Christ is one Part of the Work that the Lord puts into the Hands of Ministers; for this End the Ministry of Reconciliation is committed unto them; it is for this End they are sent forth as Ambassadors for Christ, to intreat Sinners to be reconciled to God, *2 Cor. v. 19, 20.* Again, another Part of the Work that they are employed in is,

is to build up Saints. The whole Church of Believers must be built up in the Knowledge of Christ, till they attain unto the Noon-Day Vision of Glory; they must be built up in Sanctification and Holiness, thro' Faith, till the Work of Sanctification be compleated in Glorification: For this End Ministers are Shepherds, and it belongs to them to feed Christ's Sheep and Lambs; Ministers are Stewards of the Mysteries of God, and it belongs to them to divide the spiritual Bread, and to give the Children of the House their Food in Season: This is their Work; yea, the Church is God's Husbandry, his spiritual Building, and Ministers are Labourers together with him, 1 Cor. iii. 9. In a Word, a Gospel-Ministry, and all Ordinances whatsoever, are given for gathering in and building up the Church, Eph. iv. 11, 12. *He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints for the Work of the Ministry, and for edifying the Body of Christ; this is the Work we are employed in, and all of us should be importunate with the Lord, for Assistance and Success from him in the Work. And I offer the following Reasons.*

First, Upon the Account of the Greatness of the the Work. To gather in Sinners to Christ is a great Work; it is so great that it requires creating Power; yea, it is a greater Work by far than the first Creation of Things out of nothing. Here the exceeding Greatness of *Jehovah's* Power is put forth, Eph. i. 19. The Lord appropriates this Work to himself; tho' he employ Ministers as his Instruments, yet it is his Calling, yea, *the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus*, Philip. iii. 14.

2dly. Ministers should be importunate with him on the Account of their own Weakness; they are insufficient for the Work of themselves; they are

Men,

Men, they are sinful Men, they are Men of like Passions with others ; *This Treasure is in earthen Vessels, that the Excellency of the Power may be of God,* 1 Cor. iv. 7.

3dly. The Difficulties that we have to encounter with make this Importunity needful. The strong Holds of natural Enmity and Depravation must be attacked, and these strong Holds are aided and assisted by all the Power, Malice and Policy of *Satan* ; he is the strong Man that keeps the House, and makes all the Resistance he can unto the Work of the Lord in the Hand of the Church's Overseers ; he will keep the Possession till a stronger bind and cast him out. The World also bears an inveterate Enmity and Prejudice at the spiritual Laws, Censures and Government of Christ's House ; they will not have this Man to reign over them ; they say, *Let us break the Lord's Bands asunder, and cast away his Cords from us,* Psalm ii. 3. In a Word, those whom God employs in his Work have Men and Devils against them, Hell and Earth against them ; therefore they should be importunate that the Lord may give Assistance and Success in the Work.

All the Use I make of this Doctrine, is in a Word by Way of Exhortation.

If it be so, that such whom God employs in his Work should be importunate with him for Assistance and Success in it, this doth exhort us, who are in the Ministry, in a special Manner, to be importunate with the Lord, that he may put to his Hand to his own Work, that he may be with us in the Work, and give Success to our Endeavours. Let us all cry with *Moses* the Man of God, in the Words of my Text, *The Work of our Hands establish thou it, yea, the Work of our Hands establish thou it.* I shall offer a few Considerations to inforce

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this Exhortation, and then conclude with a Word to the Christian People.

First of all, Let us consider the Lord's Work goes slowly on amongst our Hands at this Day; the Work of Gathering in, and the Work of Building up, is very much at a Stand; it is the general and too well-founded Regret of all, who have any Measure of spiritual Discerning, that the Gospel has little Success either for Conversion or Confirmation, that *Israel* is not gathered, that few are brought in to Christ, and that the Work of the Lord goes but slowly on amongst them that are in Christ, that they are not built up in Holiness, that Religion in its Life and Power is very low amongst them. These Things have a double Voice unto us in the Ministry.

First, They call upon us to try ourselves, lest there be any Cause on our Part why Matters are so. Have we not Reason to inquire if our Hands are employed with that Activity and Diligence about the Lord's Work that becomes, if we travail as in Birth till Christ be formed in the Hearts of our Hearers, if we have a suitable Concern for Souls upon our Spirits, if we water our Preachings, and other Parts of our Ministerial Work, with Prayer for Success and Increase, if our Walk and Conversation be like our Doctrine, if it be such as becomes the Ministers and Ambassadors of the Lord Jesus? All these Things are necessary Means to make the Work of the Lord go on prosperously in our Hands. But are there any amongst us who will not find Reason, after a serious Communing with your own Hearts, to say, *Lord enter not into Judgment with thy Servant?* 2dly. If the Lord's Work goes slowly on, this calls us to that Importunity that my Text and Doctrine do demand of us. Let us cry, that

that the Lord may put to his Hand to his own Work, and make it prosper in our Hands, *The Work of our Hands establish thou it, &c.*

2dly. Let us consider, many eminent Instruments, who were employed in the Work of the Lord, have been carried off the Stage of late, some of them in their Prime and Vigour, who, by Course of Nature, might have had their Hands much longer about the Lord's Work. This City has smarted under such Strokes, this Presbytery and this Province, frequently, yea, the whole Church and Land; and tho' there are not a few that are looking towards the holy Ministry, yet it is to be feared there are few to fill up the Rooms of the able Underworkers, who now rest from their Labours. Our *Judah* may say, *The Rubbish is great, and the Strength of the Bearers of Burdens is decayed.* Should not this move to an Importunity with the Lord, that he may put to his Hand to his own Work? Let us cry, *The Work of our Hands establish thou it, yea, the Work of our Hands establish thou it.*

3dly. Consider, though all Hands should be at Work, if the Lord put not his own Hand to the Work, it will never go on; the Work is so great, and we are so weak, that it can never go on without him; the Difficulties are so strong, that we can never surmount them without him. *Paul* doth plant, and *Apollus* doth water, but God doth give the Increase.

4thly. Importunity has often prevailed with him. The several Ages of the Church can afford remarkable Instances of this; the infant primitive Church-Members were all with one Accord in Prayer and Supplication, when the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles, *Acts* ii, 1, 2. They were employed in importunate Prayer, and God came down

down from Heaven, and did put to his Hand to his own Work. Then, O what glorious Fruit did follow? Thousands were born at once in *Zion*. That great Man of God in our own Land, Mr. *Robert Bruce*, was overheard in secret Prayer, before he came to the Publick, saying, I protest I will not go except thou go with me, I will not go except thou go with me. And when he came forth, God was seen to be in and with him; as the Author of the fulfilling of the Scriptures narrates, a Shower of divine Influences did accompany the Word spoken by him.

Finally, God will appear and will put to his Hand to his own Work. If it should be inquired at us, Watchmen, what of the Night? May we not give the Return the Prophet is directed to give, *Iſa. xxi. 12. The Morning cometh, and also the Night?* The Church at this Time is under many threatening Providences that presage a Night, yet these very Providences presage that the Morning is coming. That we are now under threatening Providences is evident, if we consider the universal Degeneracy of the reformed Churches from the Purity, Power, spiritual Life and Vigour that appeared in reforming Days and Times; the great Ones of the Earth do not concern themselves in the Interest of Christ's Kingdom and Glory, farther than they think Religion subservient to their own political Interests; no Care is taken either about Personal, Family or National Reformation; yea, at this Day, the Foundations are boldly struck at, not only by open and avowed Atheists and Deists, that deny all revealed Religion, but also by some, who, tho' they profess a Regard for divine Revelation, yet are not afraid to move Debates about the supreme Dei-

ty of the Son of God, who is the true God, even God over all blessed for ever. Yea, farther, if we consider, that Profanity as a Flood has overflown the Churches, and that every one of them seem to have fallen into a deep spiritual Lethargy, and also the present State of the Antichristian Kingdom; Antichrist, for some Years bypast, seems rather to have gathered Strength, than to be weakned; all these Things presage that our Night may be yet darker. Whether the three Days and the Half of Killing the Witnesses, mentioned *Rev. ii. 7.* be yet past or to come, I cannot determine. I do not think any can possibly determine, tho' various and different Conjectures have been made; but I may say, the present State of the reformed Churches threatens an overflowing Scourge. Yet, let me also add, the Morning cometh, the Morning of God's appearing for his own Work; there is a Bow in the Church's darkest Cloud; the Church's greatest Extremity, and the Lord's Appearing, have, in all Ages of the Church, ordinarily trysted together. I shall conclude this Head with a judicious Reflection or two of that great Observer of divine Providences, the Author of the fulfilling of the Scriptures, in his Appendix to the first Part of that excellent Work: After having observed, that the Church has gone through that long continued and most dismal Trial, which, under the Time of the Gospel, until the Close of Time, was to go over her Head, even that sore Bondage from Antichrist and under his Reign; ' This Winter being in a great Measure now past, and her Spring begun, (says he) there are clear and continuing Symptoms, by which some notable Crisis in her Condition may be discerned, that after many Conflicts and sore Wrestlings, since her Victory begun over Antichrist, this

Time

• Time of the Church seems to fall under that
 • more remarkable Assault, which may be looked
 • for from this Adversary, before the pouring out
 • of the fifth Vial upon his Throne and Seat,
 • which, as a Preludium of so great a Victory, may,
 • in some Proportion thereto, be more dreadful and
 • sharp, for a Time, than any we have seen : The
 • Scriptures point clearly at this, which shew the
 • wrestling Condition of the Church, and a War
 • continued betwixt Antichrist and the Lamb,
 • even in his falling State, until the last Decision
 • put him off the Field, *Rev. xvii. 14. For the Lamb*
 • *shall overcome, and they who are on his Side, who are*
 • *called, chosen, and faithful.* As a Woman when
 she is in Travail, her sharpest Showers go before
 and hasten the Delivery, so the Church's Victory
 over Antichrist may come through one of the fo-
 rest and sharpest Assaults from this Adversary, *Mic.*
iv. 13. Be in Pain, O Daughter of Zion, and go
forth into Babylon, for there shalt thou be delivered.
 After all, whatever Steps the Lord may take, this
 is sure, the Lord will save Zion, and build the Ci-
 ties of Judah ; the Time to favour Zion is set, and
 the set Time is hastning apace. Will God appear
 for his Work ? Then let us meet an appearing God,
 whether in a Way of Judgment or Mercy, with
 a fervent Importunity, that he may put to his own
 Hand to the Work of Gathering in and Building
 up the Church.

I shall conclude all with a Word to the Christi-
 an People, and there are two or three Things I
 would recommend to you.

First, Has the Lord employed your Watchmen
 and Overseers in his Work, in the Work of Ga-
 thering in and Building up the Church ? Take heed
 that ye weaken not the Workmens Hands ; despise

not their Persons, but esteem them highly for their Work's Sake ; submit to their faithful Reproofs, Warnings, Admonitions and Counsels, *Heb. xiii.*

17. Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your Souls.

2dly. Be not stumbled at the Lord's Work, on the Account of the Weaknesses that do attend the Workmen : We whom God has employed in the Work are earthen Vessels, Men of like Passions with yourselves, compassed about with Infirmities as well as you, and you have Reason to bless the Lord that the Work is committed to such ; you could not have born the Presence of Angels, had the Work been in their Hands ; and they could not have dealt with you from a Feeling of your Infirmities : No doubt you may observe the many Failings that do attend us in our Pulpit-Appearances, in our Managements in Judicatories, and in the whole of our Deportment. But O remember the Work we are employed in is the Lord's Work, therefore stumble not at the Lord's Work in our Hands.

3dly. Look well how the Work of God thrives in your Hearts. If it doth not thrive in your Hearts, it doth not prosper in your Hands ; if the Work of Faith with Power be not wrought in you, if you are not built up in Holiness and Comfort, through Faith unto Salvation, our Labour is all lost amongst you.

Finally, Join with us in this holy Importunity, that the Lord may put to his Hand to his own Work ; this God requires from you as well as from us, and the Gain and Advantage will be yours as much as ours. If you in this Place were importunate with God for this End ; if Ministers and People in this Province ; if Ministers and People through

through the Land, were exercised in a holy Impor-
 tunity for the Return of the divine Presence a-
 mongst us, for more discernible Success unto Go-
 spel-Ordinances ; this would be a promising To-
 ken for Good, that the Name of this City, the
 Name of this Province, and the Name of this Church
 and Land, might yet be *Jehovah Shamma*, the Lord
 is there.

F I N I S.
 7 AP 53

STEDFASTNESS in the
FAITH recommended,

I N A
S E R M O N

Preached on *Sabbath-Evening* after the
Celebration of the LORD's SUP-
PER at *Perth*, *July 22. 1733.*

By Mr. WILLIAM WILSON one of the Ministers of
the Gospel there.

To which is prefixed,

A short Account of the Occasion of
publishing this, together with some
Reasons for his *condemned Conduct* ;
directed by the Author to the People
of his Pastoral Charge.

E D I N B U R G H,

Printed for *David Duncan*, and sold at his House,
opposite to the *Weigh-House*, North-Side of the
Street. MCCDXLVII.



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Unto the Inhabitants of the Burgh and
Parish of PERTH,

GRACE and PEACE be multiplied.

THE Oecasion of publishing the following Discourse, delivered in your Hearing, is a Report made by the reverend Presbytery of *Perth* to the Commission of the late General Assembly, at their Meeting in *August* last, the Tenor whereof follows.

Perth, July 25. 1733.

THE Presbytery having caused read the Act of the late General Assembly, with respect to Mr. Ebenezer Erskine Minister of the Gospel at *Stirling*, and the Brethren that adhered to his Protest, whereby they appoint the several Presbyteries, of which the said Brethren are Members, to report to the Commission in *August*, and subsequent Meetings of it, their Conduct and Behaviour with respect to the Act of Assembly: And this Presbytery having made Enquiry as to the Behaviour of two of their Brethren that joined the said Mr. Erskine in his Protest, since said last Assembly, they find, That there is not only a common Fame, but some Members of the Presbytery, who have of late heard the two Brethren preach, did declare, that they continue in their Sermons to reflect upon the Proceedings

Proceedings of the late and preceeding Assemblies: And the Presbytery appoints the Report hereof to be laid before the Commission of the General Assembly, to meet at Edinburgh the second Wednesday of August next to come. — After the Presbytery had agreed to the above Report, it was moved, that it might be added, as a farther Evidence of the Guilt of these Brethren, That some Members, who had Occasion to hear these Brethren of late, refused to inform the Presbytery, if or not they did in their Sermons reflect on the Judicatories of the Church, which, even in Justice to these Brethren, they were bound to do, had they been innocent. Then the Question being put, Add this as a Clause to the Report, or not? Rolls called, and Votes marked, it carried, nemine contradicente, Add the said Clause.

This Report the Presbytery was resolved upon at the Close of their Meeting, when some had gone off; but two reverend Brethren having returned about the Time when they were concluding the above Report, dissented from it, and with them a ruling Elder. My Brother Mr. Moncrief, who was also concerned in it, was not present at this Meeting of Presbytery, and I was obliged to leave them before any Thing about the said Report was moved, being to preach our ordinary Week-Day's Sermon next Day: But tho' there is little more than the Breadth of one of our Streets betwixt them and me, yet they thought fit to lay this general Charge against me before the reverend Commission, *Of reflecting upon the Proceedings of the late and preceeding Assemblies*, without acquainting me in the least with it. If it is agreeable to the Rules of the Gospel, or to common Justice and Equity, to receive a Report of this Nature against a Brother, or to table such a general Accusation, in so publick a Manner,

Manner, against him, without once hearing him upon the Cause, I leave it to others to judge.

I am credibly informed, the Sermon I delivered on the *Sabbath-Evening*, after the Celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in this Place, was the only Preaching of mine that was mentioned as giving Occasion to the common Fame that the Presbytery's Report bears, and as the Ground of their general Accusation. I am not conscious to myself that I delivered any Thing contrary to my Duty, or improper for you to hear upon that solemn Occasion; and therefore I thought it was needful, for the Sake of Truth itself, as well as for my Exoneration, to make the following Discourse as publick as the general Charge against me has been. The *first two general Heads*, together with the *first eight Directions* now published at the Close of the Whole, were only what was delivered that Evening; and I have, to the best of my Knowledge, published, in the express Words in which I delivered myself, any Thing I reckoned might have given Occasion to the *common Fame* that the Presbytery's Report bears; and the Reader may judge for himself, if there was any Ground for the above general Charge and Accusation. As for the *other doctrinal Heads*, together with the *Application*, they contain only the Substance of what was preached on that same Subject the Lord's Day thereafter, and on two Week-Days.

It is now Seventeen Years since I had your unanimous Call to come and labour amongst you in the Work of the Gospel: The Countenance and Encouragement you have always given me, and your particular Interest in me, oblige me to give you some Account of my late Conduct, for which I am condemned in so publick a Manner.

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The *Sibboleth* of our divided and distracted Times, is that Act of Assembly 1732. concerning the *Settlement of vacant Churches*. By it the Power of electing and calling Ministers is given to Heritors (as such; yea, the Act is laid in such Terms, as, tho' all the Elders and People of a Congregation are reclaiming, yet the Majority of the Heritors, whether they have their Residence in the Parish or not, whether they are of the Communion of the Church of *Scotland* or not, may impose a Minister upon them, unless the reclaiming People can fix *Error* in Doctrine, or something *scandalous* in Walk and Practice on the Man who is the Heritors Choice. This appears to me to be contrary to the Laws and Institutions of the Lord Jesus, the only Lord and Lawgiver unto his Church and People, being contrary to the Apostolical Practice and Example recorded in the New Testament, an Encroachment upon the Rights and Charters of the Sheep and Flock of Christ, and also cross to the End and Design of the giving of a Gospel-Ministry unto the Church.

It cannot be pled, That Heritors, as such, have any Right or Title from the Word of God to elect or call Ministers. Civil Honour ought to be given to every one to whom it is due; and Harmony betwixt Heritors and the People of a Parish, in an Affair of such Importance unto them, as it is most desirable, so it ought to be endeavoured by all proper and expedient Means: But to give an ecclesiastical Trust and Privilege, by a Church-Act and Constitution, to any Set of Men, upon the Account of their Heritage, or other worldly Considerations, appears to me to be contrary to the Nature of Christ's Kingdom, which is *spiritual*. And, as it involves the Judicatories of Christ's House
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in Debates and Questions about the civil Rights and Titles of Heritors, which do not belong unto them, so it cannot be vindicated from that *partial Respect of Persons* condemned by the Word of God, which, in Matters of this Kind, admits of no Difference betwixt *the Man with the Gold-Ring in goodly Apparel*, and the *poor Man in mean Raiment*, James ii. 2, 3, 4, 5.

To impose a Minister upon a *reclaiming and dissenting* People, who yet make a *professed Subjection* to the Ordinances of the Gospel, and declare themselves willing and ready to submit to the Ministry of such as are settled amongst them according to the Rules of the Word, appears to me to be contrary to the Apostolical Example and Practice recorded in the New Testament. I shall only touch at two Passages, the one in the first, and the other in the sixth Chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*; they are both made Use of by our reformed Divines in their Pleadings against the Tyranny and Oppression of the Church of *Rome*.

As to the first of them, the Account given by the inspired Historian *Luke*, stands thus. Peter stood up in the Midst of the Disciples, and it is observed that the *Number of the Names together were about an Hundred and twenty*, Acts i. 15. He acquaints them of a Vacancy in the Apostolical College, by the Treachery and Death of *Judas*, v. 16, 20. He moves that One should be ordained in his Room, and, to direct them in their Nomination, he informs them of the Qualifications requisite in him who should succeed in that important Charge, *Verses* 21, 22. Then it follows, *They appointed Two*; Verse 23. They all joined together in Prayer, and in Prayer made a solemn Reference of the Matter to the Lord, for his immediate Designation of the par-

particular Person, *Verses 24. 25.* and then they give forth their Lots in the 26th *Verse*. The Nomination or Appointment of the Two is made by all the Hundred and twenty Disciples assembled together; and this must be admitted, without an evident stretching of the Context, seeing the Number of them is so particularly condescended upon and the Apostle *Peter* addresses them all under the Appellation of *Men and Brethren*. For clearing this Passage a little, I make the following Observes.

1st. This is the first Account we have of any Officer being given unto the Church after the Ascension of our blessed Lord; it is the first Designation and Appointment of a teaching Officer unto the Church immediately after our Lord's Ascension.

2dly. The Apostle *Peter*, in his Discourse unto the Disciples, makes not the least Intimation that he had any immediate or extraordinary Direction for the Motion that he now makes unto them, but only produceth for his Warrant a Passage from *Psalms* cix. for, says he, *It is written in the Book of Psalms, — His Bishoprick let another take*. Therefore, to alledge that *Peter* had Knowledge, by extraordinary or immediate Revelation, of the particular Person whom God had designed should succeed *Judas* in the Apostleship, is so far from being evident by his Speech, that it appears to be directly contrary unto it.

3dly. It is most probable, that the Hundred and twenty Disciples, assembled together at this Time, were such who, for the most Part, dwelt in or about *Jerusalem*, where the first Christian Church was gathered and constituted, according to the Prophecy, *Micah* iv. 2. *For the Law shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* And

And therefore there was no Need for assembling together, upon this Occasion, the Five hundred Brethren by whom Christ was seen at once, and who were scattered throughout *Judea* and *Galilee*. And if it is alledged that the Hundred and twenty here assembled were Church-Officers, this is not only without Warrant from the Word of God, but appears to be contrary to it, in regard the Lord Jesus gave Office, Power and Authority to none after his Resurrection, and before his Ascension, but to his eleven Apostles only, *John* xx. 22, 23. *Matth.* xxviii. 18, 19. As for the seventy Disciples mentioned in *Luke* x. as we do not read that their Commission was renewed after the Resurrection of Christ, so their Mission seems to have been only transient and temporary, and designed to prepare Christ's Way into the Places to which he was to come, *Luke* x. 1, 9, 10, 11. And there is no Evidence for it, that any of them were present at this Meeting.

4thly. Tho' the Teaching-Officer, designed in this Place, is an extraordinary One, and therefore behoved to have an immediate Commission, yet all the Apostles, beside what was extraordinary in their Office, had every Thing that was proper to all the ordinary Ministers of the Gospel: Therefore we find them sometimes laying aside their extraordinary Character, and acting in the Capacity of other ordinary teaching Elders; so did all the Apostles at the Synodical Meeting at *Jerusalem*, *Acts* xv. so did the Apostle *Paul* in the Ordination of *Timothy*, *1 Tim.* iv. 14. and *2 Tim.* i. 6. so does the Apostle *Peter*, when he says in his first Epistle, *Chap.* v. 1. *The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder.* Hence every Minister of the Gospel is a Successor to the Apostles in every Thing

that was ordinary and standing in their Work and Office. This will not be disputed by any who own themselves to be of the Presbyterian Denomination.

5thly. There is a great Difference betwixt the Election or Nomination of one to a sacred Office in the Church, and authoritative Mission. This will readily be granted likewise by such as are of Presbyterian Principles. Authoritative Mission to a sacred Work and Office in the Church belongs only to the Office-Bearers of the Church, who, according to the Apostolical Pattern and Example, authorize and set apart others for a sacred Function in the Church, with the usual Solemnities of Fasting, Prayer and Imposition of Hands, after Trial of their Gifts and Abilities for the Discharge of the same.

6thly. In the Case of *Matthias*, there is a solemn Reference of the Matter made unto the Lord, for an extraordinary and immediate Decision in this weighty and important Affair; and the Signification of the Mind and Will of God in it is committed unto a Lot. It is needless for us to inquire into the Manner how they gave forth their Lots; only we may observe, what is plain from the Text, that when the Lot falls upon *Matthias*, he is not authorized unto his Work and Office by Prayer and Imposition of Hands, but the Intimation of the Mind of the Lord, by the Lot, is reckoned equivalent to that immediate Mission that the other eleven Apostles had from the Lord Jesus himself; and therefore, without any farther Solemnity, he is *numbered with the eleven Apostles*.

7thly. We may observe, That there is nothing extraordinary in the Case of *Matthias*, except what concerned his authoritative Mission; all the previous

vions Steps unto it are such as are made according to an ordinary Course of Judgment and Deliberation. The Apostle *Peter* lays before them an express Scripture-Warrant for appointing one to succeed in the Room of *Judas*, Verse 20. and points out unto them the Qualifications requisite in him who was to be ordained unto that important Charge, Verses 21, 22. and it is said, *They appointed Two*, Verse 23. and there is no doubt but the Two they named were both of them such who they judged had the Qualifications mentioned. And it is observable that the Leet is restricted to Two; a fewer Number there could not be, unless they had named the particular Person, which could not be done in this Case, because he was to bear an extraordinary Character: Yet the Leet is restricted to Two, even the smallest Number, which is a plain Evidence of the Interest and Concern of all the Disciples here assembled in this Matter; especially when it is considered, that the restricting of the Leet to the smallest Number, was, upon the Matter, a restricting of the immediate Determination to One of the Two whom they had named. Farther, The Two who are named are not presented to the Apostles that they may set one of them apart by Prayer and Imposition of Hands, but an Appeal is made by all of them jointly unto the Lord himself, for his immediate Decision in this Matter: Whence it is plain, that the authoritative Mission of *Matthias* is the only Thing that is extraordinary and immediate in this Case, and it is not pled that authoritative Mission does belong in any Case to the whole Community of the Faithful.

From these Observes the following Conclusion is plain unto me.

If, at the first Erection and Constitution of the New Testament Church, the first Teaching-Officer, that was given immediately after our Lord's Ascension, was ordained in consequence of the Choice, Nomination or Consent of all the Disciples assembled together, then Ministers of the Gospel ought to be given unto the Church and People of God with their Call and Consent. If it is said, He was an extraordinary Officer, the Argument is yet the stronger ; for if, in the giving of an extraordinary Officer, such as bore the Character of Disciples had an Interest in his Nomination, and if their Choice or Consent was thought needful, then it is much more requisite in the giving of ordinary Ministers unto the Church ; especially when it is considered that all of them are Successors to the Apostles in every Thing that is ordinary in their Work and Calling.

Yea, the Conclusion appears with some more Force and Evidence, when it is considered, that, in the giving of the first Teacher unto the New Testament Church, nothing was taken out of the Hands of the Disciples, but his authoritative Mission, which in no Case belongs unto them. Then, if Apostolical Practice and Example is a Rule or Pattern unto us, it is Violence done unto the Heritage and Flock of God to impose Ministers upon them, when they are both dissenting and reclaiming.

The other Passage I name is, the sixth of the *Acts*, and it stands plainly thus. The Apostles represent unto the Multitude of the Disciples the Necessity of chusing some to have the Care and Oversight of the Poor, *Versè 1, 2.* They direct them to chuse some of their own Number for this Effect, and inform them of the Qualifications necessary in the Persons to be chosen, reserving unto themselves

themselves what did properly belong unto them as Office Bearers in the Church, namely, the authoritative Mission of such as should be chosen; therefore say they, *Whom we may appoint over this Business*, Verse 3. The Multitude of the Disciples make the Choice of the seven Deacons in the 5th Verse; they present them before the Apostles, and the Apostles, being satisfied with the Choice, set them apart unto their Work and Office, with the usual Solemnities of Prayer and Imposition of Hands. And here I make the following Observes.

1st. That the Deacon is the first ordinary standing Officer given unto the New Testament Church after the Ascension of our blessed Lord. The Church of *Jerusalem* was at that Time under the immediate Inspection and Direction of the Twelve Apostles themselves, who did well supply the Place of all the ordinary Ministers of the Gospel, who were given afterwards to this as well as other Churches that were erected and constituted by them.

2^{dly}. There is no material Difference in the Steps previously taken unto the Mission of *Matthias*, and that of the seven Deacons. In the Case of *Matthias*, as was observed, *Peter* addresseth all the Disciples present, and shews them the Necessity of appointing One to succeed in the Room of *Judas*; they name Two, out of which One is to be ordained to this sacred Office: And, in the Case of the Deacons, the Apostles called the Multitude of the Disciples together, and represented unto them the Expediency and Necessity of chusing some to take the Oversight of the Poor; the Disciples make the Nomination of the Seven: All the Difference is in what concerns the Mission of the one and the other. In the Case of *Matthias*, there is a solemn Reference made unto the Lord for an immediate Designation

Designation of the Person, because he was to bear an extraordinary Character; but, in the Case of the Deacons, there is a particular Designation of the Persons made by the whole Multitude of the Disciples, and they are presented unto the Apostles, who set them apart unto their Office with the usual Solemnity observed in ordinary Cases, because their Office was standing and ordinary. Hence I conclude, That since all the previous Steps unto the Mission of the first Officers given unto the New Testament Church, immediately after the Ascension of Christ, had nothing extraordinary in them, they must be recorded as a plain Pattern and Directory unto the Church in all succeeding Generations; and any Thing that can be reasonably pled, as what should not be a standing Practice in the Church, is that extraordinary Circumstance in the Case of *Matthias*, which was necessary to determine his immediate Mission, and to give him an extraordinary Character.

From these two Passages of Scripture we may see, that the first Teaching-Officer, appointed unto the Church immediately after the Ascension of our blessed Lord, was given in consequence of a Choice or Nomination made by the Disciples assembled together; as also, that the first Deacons were given by the Choice or Nomination of the whole Multitude of the Disciples; and all the Circumstances are so particularly condescended upon by the sacred Historian, that we have Ground to conclude, a plain Pattern and Directory is laid down, in these two particular Instances, for the Direction of the Church, in all succeeding Ages, how to proceed in the Designation and Appointment of such as are to bear Office over them: And the inspired Penman having, in the very Front of his excellent and
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succinct History concerning the Erection and Con-
 stitution of the New Testament Church, treated so
 particularly of the Manner of giving the first
 Teaching-Officer unto the Church, and to whom
 all the Ministers of the Gospel are Successors in all
 the ordinary Parts of his Calling and Office; as
 also, having treated of the Manner of the Institu-
 tion of the first Deacons, he does not afterwards in-
 sist upon this Subject; and there was no Need he
 should do so: Therefore, when he writes of giv-
 ing of Office-Bearers unto the Churches after-
 wards erected by the Apostles, he wraps up all,
 according to his usual Manner, in a very senti-
 mentous Phrase, *Acts xiv. 23. And when they had ordain-*
ed them Elders in every Church. I shall not in this
 Preface insist upon the native and just Import of the
 original Word; only it is well known, that in o-
 ther Translations it is rendred, *When they had ap-*
pointed them Elders by Suffrages, or Votes, in every
Church. So Beza, in his *Latin* Translation of the
 New Testament.

If Apostolical Practice and Example, in the E-
 rection and Constitution of the New Testament
 Church, is not reckoned equivalent unto a positive
 Precept, then we have no Warrant for solemnizing
 our Christian Sabbath on the first Day of the Week;
 yea, the whole Frame of our Presbyterian Church-
 Government may be overturned, and the Govern-
 ment of the Church modelled according to the
 Pleasure and Arbitriment of Men. I sincerely wish
 that nothing of this Spirit may ever appear to be
 working amongst us.

As the present Practice, of imposing Ministers
 upon a reclaiming and dissenting Eldership and
 People, is contrary unto the above Apostolical
 Pattern and Example; so it appears to me to be
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an Encroachment upon the Rights and Character of the Flock and Sheep of Christ recorded in his Word. As for Instance, it is the Character of them, that *they know his Voice*, John x. 3. They are commanded to *try the Spirits*, 1 John iv. 1. And *the spiritual Ear trieth Words, as the Mouth tasteth Meat*, Job xxxiv. 3. If a Judgment of Discretion is the Right and Privilege of all the Disciples of Christ, with respect to whatever Doctrines are brought unto them, and if it is a Character of them, that they have a spiritual Knowledge and Discerning of the Voice of Christ in his own Word, it must also be their Right and Privilege to have a Judgment of Discretion about these Gifts, and that Manner of Teaching which is most adapted to their spiritual Edification. As there are Diversities of Gifts, so one Gift is more adapted to the Capacity and Edification of one Congregation than another: Therefore, to impose Ministers upon a reclaiming and dissenting Congregation, must be a plain Encroachment upon that Judgment of Discretion, which is the unquestionable Right and Privilege of all that are the Flock of Christ; especially when it is considered, that their Choice may fall upon one who is at least as unexceptionable in the Eye of the Presbytery, as the other who is imposed upon them. And, when this is the Case, every unprejudiced Person may consider, where, according to the Word of God, and common Equity, the Balance should be cast; and if the great and valuable Ends of a Gospel-Ministry, *namely*, the Conversion of Sinners, 2 Cor. v. 20. the Perfecting of the Saints, and the Edification of the Body of Christ, Eph. iv. 12. if, I say, these valuable Ends can probably be obtained by imposing Ministers upon a dissenting Congregation, at the Instance of some

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Heritors, the most of them perhaps not residing, or disaffected unto our Presbyterian Constitution.

This leads me to another Observe, and it is the last I make on this Head, *namely*, That if the Power of electing and calling Ministers had been restricted, by the Act of Assembly, to such as are of known and disinterested Affection to the Government of the Church of *Scotland*, and to the pure Worship practised therein, the Grievance complained of had been more tolerable; we might have reasonably expected that such would have had some Regard in their Calling of Ministers to People of the same Principles and Sentiments with themselves; but it is otherways, this Power is given, and that by an ecclesiastical Act and Constitution too, to Protestant Heritors in general, without any other Limitation or Restriction; whereby the Settlement of many Congregations in *Scotland* is put into the Hands of such who will think it no Reflection upon their Character, when I say, that they are declared Opposites to the Constitution of the Church of *Scotland*, and disaffected in Principle to the late glorious Revolution, and to the Protestant Succession in the illustrious Family of *Hanover*. This is a Complaint I do not know if ever they would have asked of the Church of *Scotland*; and I am sure the Day has been when they would not have expected it: But I do not insist upon this, in regard the ablest Advocates for the Act have not attempted any Vindication of it.

It is said, The Point upon which our present Testimony is stated, is a disputable Point. If, by a disputable Point, they mean a Point that has been and is actually disputed by many, I grant it is so, and so is our Presbyterian Church-Government, and so are all the Articles of our Christian Religi-

on ; they are disputed by too many in this Age : But if, by a disputable Point, is meant a Point that has never been fixed in this Church, or a Point that such as are of the Presbyterian Denomination have disputed amongst themselves, then I refuse that our Testimony is stated upon any such disputable Point: The Points upon which our present Testimony stands are as follows.

That Heritors, as such, have no Warrant from the Word of God to call and chuse Ministers ; yea, that it is contrary to the Word of God to give this Trust to Heritors as such, and particularly to those that are not of the Communion of the Church of *Scotland* ; and that it is contrary to Apostolical Practice and Example, to impose Ministers upon a reclaiming and dissenting Congregation, who are ready and willing to submit to the Ordinances of the Gospel. As these are the Points upon which our Testimony against the late Act of Assembly is stated, so, if it can be made appear that any of the Presbyterian Denomination (before that Act of Assembly gave Birth to our present Disputes) have affirmed, that Ministers may be warrantably settled over reclaiming and dissenting Congregations, at the Instance or upon the Call of Heritors, most of them perhaps not residing, or not of the Communion of the Church of *Scotland* ; or that Ministers may be settled, according to the Rules of God's Word, in Congregations where the major Part both of Elders and People, are dissenting and reclaiming, tho' the said dissenting and reclaiming People make a professed Subjection unto the Ordinances of the Gospel ; if I say, they can make it appear that any of the Presbyterian Denomination have affirmed such Things, then they may argue that our Testimony is stated upon a disputable Point.

But it is not the abovementioned Act of Assembly alone, but some other Proceedings of the Judicatories of this Church, together with some Steps I judged it my Duty to take in Conjunction with my other Brethren, that have been the more immediate Occasion of the condemnatory Sentence that is past against me, of which I offer the following short Account.

Mr. *Erskine* Minister at *Stirling* did, in a Sermon preached in your Hearing at the Opening of our Synod *October* last, with some Freedom and Plainness of Speech, declare the Sinfulness and Unwarrantableness of the Act of Assembly 1732. and of the present Proceedings of our Church-Judicatories in the Settlement of Ministers over reclaiming and dissenting Congregations: The Freedom and Faithfulness he used was so much resented, that three Days were spent in warm Reasonings upon the Sermon; and then, by a small Majority, the Preacher was condemned as censurable for some Expressions emitted by him in his Sermon, and appointed to be brought to the Bar of the Synod to be rebuked and admonished. As he appealed from this Sentence to the general Assembly, so I judged it my Duty, with some others of my Brethren, to protest against and dissent from the same.

When this Cause came before the late General Assembly, they thought fit to affirm the Sentence of our Synod, in the following Terms. *The General Assembly having, at a former Diet, considered an Appeal entred by Mr. Ebenezer Erskine Minister at Stirling, from a Sentence of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, wherein the said Synod had found Ground to censure him, and appointed him to be rebuked, on account of several indecent Expressions uttered by him in a Sermon preached before the said Synod in October last,*
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tending to disquiet the Peace of this Church, and impugning several Acts of Assembly, and Proceedings of the Church-Judicatories, and had appointed him to be admonished to behave orderly for the future, — the Assembly found these Expressions vented by Mr. Erskine, and contained in the Minutes of the foresaid Synod's Proceedings, with the Answers thereto made by him, to be offensive, and tend to disturb the Peace and good Order of this Church; therefore they approved the Proceedings of the Synod, and appointed him to be rebuked and admonished by the Moderator at their own Bar. Yet none of the Expressions alledged to be emitted by Mr. Erskine, nor any Thing given in by him in his Answers unto the Synod, was found, either by the Synod or General Assembly, to be contrary to to the Word of God, or the received and approved Standards of this Church.

Mr. Erskine acknowledging a very great and dutiful Regard to the Judicatories of this Church, to whom he owned Subjection in the Lord; yet, in respect the Assembly had found him censurable, and had tendered a Rebuke and Admonition to him for Things he conceived agreeable unto and founded upon the Word of God, and our approved Standards; therefore he found himself obliged to protest against the foresaid Censure, as importing, That he had in his Doctrine, at the Opening of the Synod October last, departed from the Word of God, and the foresaid Standards; and that he should be at Liberty to preach the same Truths of God, and to testify against the same or like Defections of this Church, upon all proper Occasions; adhering unto the Testimonies he had formerly emitted against the Act of Assembly 1732. whether in the Protest against it in open Assembly, or yet in his Synodical Sermon.

If this Cause had been Mr. Erskine's personal Cause, I should have judged my Dissent from the Sentence

Sentence of our Synod sufficient to exoner me in the present Case; but when I considered, that it is a Cause of very publick Concern, and where-in all the Ministers and Members of this Church are so nearly interested, I judg'd it my Duty to own my Dissent from the Sentence of our Synod at the Bar of the Assembly, who thought fit to refuse the Dissenters a Hearing on that Subject; and when the General Assembly affirmed the said Sentence, I durst not be silent, and therefore, in Conjunction with my Brother Mr. Moncrief, I signed an Adherence to the above Protestation in the following Terms.

We undersubscribing Ministers, Dissenters from the Sentence of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, do hereby adhere to the above Protestations and Declaration, containing a Testimony against the Act of Assembly 1732. and asserting our Privilege and Duty to testify publickly against the same, or like Defections, upon all proper Occasions.

The General Assembly was so much offended at this our Protestation, that they appointed their Commission, at their Meeting August thereafter, to suspend us every One from the Exercise of our Ministry, in case we should not declare our Sorrow for our Conduct, and retract the above Paper we gave in: As also to proceed to a higher Censure against us at any subsequent Meeting, if we should be found to act contrary to the foresaid Sentence of Suspension.

As the Act of Assembly 1732. appears to me to be sinful, so the above Decision, protested against, appears to me to be such as gave sufficient Foundation and Ground for the Testimony that is given against it; in regard that, by the said Decision of Assembly, not only is our Bro-
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ther Mr. *Erskine* appointed to be rebuked, but it carries, in its own Nature, a material Declaration that all the Ministers of this Church, who shall upon any proper Occasion, regret from the Pulpit the Sinfulness or Unwarrantableness of that Act of Assembly, or of any other sinful and unwarrantable Proceedings of the Judicatories of this Church, either in the violent Settlement of Ministers, or otherways, must be brought to the Bar of Church-Judicatories, and there be rebuked for the faithful Discharge of their Duty ; therefore I have Peace in my own Mind in declaring against this Decision, and that with the Solemnity of a Protestation. Our *Representations* given in to the Commission of the General Assembly, at their Meeting *August* last, and now published to the World, contain our Reasons at large for refusing to retract our Protestation, to which I refer.

What is now past against me I know, and what I am farther threatned with I may partly know ; yet I cannot see every Thing that my above Conduct may expose me unto : But whatever I may be called to endure or suffer, according to my present Views, it is stated upon the three following Points. The *first* is, That any ecclesiastical Ordinance or Constitution, contrary to the Laws and Institutions of our Lord Jesus, the only Lord and Lawgiver unto his Church and People, is in itself sinful, and therefore can have no binding Force nor Authority over any of the Office-Bearers or Members of the Church of Christ : And such the Act of Assembly 1732. appears to me to be, for the Reasons I have already given. The *second* Point (and which is yet a more immediate Ground upon which our present Testimony is stated) is this, That the Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*

and ought, upon all proper Occasions, to declare, even from the Pulpit, the Sinfulness that is in any ecclesiastical Act and Constitution, or the Sinfulness and Unwarrantableness of such Proceedings of the Church-Judicatories, whereby the Heritage and Flock of God are oppressed, and whereby our Constitution is wounded, by the Opening of a wide Door for the bringing in of a corrupt Ministry into the Church of Christ; especially when the ordinary Means of Representations and Instructions unto our several General Assemblies have been tried, but without Success. This is what the Word of God, our Presbyterian Principles, and our Ordination-Vows and Engagements oblige us unto. This is our Duty, as we are Watchmen set upon Jerusalem's Walls, and appointed to sound the Trumpet, and to give the Alarm of approaching Danger to the City of God. The *third* Point is, That this Freedom and Liberty of testifying publicly, upon all proper Occasions, against the publick Sins and Defections of a Church, ought not to be suppressed or restrained; and if it is suppressed or restrained by an ecclesiastical Act or Decision, then it is the Duty and Privilege of the Ministers and Members of the Church, to testify against any such Sentence and Decision, as what fixeth the Ministers of the Church under sinful and unwarrantable Terms of ministerial Communion. And this is what is our Case with respect to our Protestation against the foresaid Decision of the late General Assembly. We have declared, in our Representations to the last Meeting of the Commission, that we did not intend, by our Protestation, to impugn the Power and Authority of the General Assembly to censure any of the Ministers and Members of this Church upon just and relevant Grounds, or the Exercise

Exercise of that Power and Authority according to the Word of God, and the known Principles of this Church; and that our foresaid Protestation is only a solemn attested Declaration and Testimony against a wrong Decision of the General Assembly, which lays a Restraint upon ministerial Freedom and Faithfulness: And this Protestation we could not retract, because such a Retraction might have been justly constructed, not only to be a Submitting unto a Decision that lays such a sinful Embargo upon Ministers, but also a giving up with what is a proper and legal Mean of testifying, before a Church-Judicatory, against an unwarrantable Sentence and Decision. As these are the Points upon which I am singled out, together with my other three Brethren, as the Object of the heavy and severe Censure contained in the Act and Sentence of the late General Assembly against us, so I hope I have no Ground to be afraid, or ashamed to own them.

The Church of *Scotland* has been honoured to bear Witness in a special Manner to the kingly Office of Christ, and that unto him it belongs to give Laws and Ordinances unto his own House, and Instructions unto his Ministers, who are obliged to *teach all Things whatsoever he hath commanded them*. And the above Points, upon which our present Testimony is stated, are the same, upon the Matter, with that which a great Cloud of Witnesses in *Scotland* have born Testimony unto since the Dawning of Reformation-Light amongst us. And tho' I should be exposed to suffer Trouble as an Evil-Doer, even unto Bonds, for the same, yet may I hope *the Word of the Lord is not bound*, 2 Tim. ii. 9.

Tho'

Tho' our Mission unto the Work and Office of the Ministry is mediate, yet our Commission and Authority to discharge our Ministry is from the Lord Jesus himself. Every Minister of the Gospel is honoured to be an *Ambassador for Christ*, to act in the Name of Christ, and to stand in his Stead, 2 Cor. v. 20. They have both their Commission and also their Instructions from him alone : The Judicatories of his House are only the Channel through which their Commission flows ; they are no more than the interveening Means of the Conveyance of that Power and Authority which is derived from the Lord Jesus himself ; and none can recal the Commission given unto his Ministers, but according unto the Rules and Directions that he has laid down in his own Word. There is at least some Resemblance in it unto the present Subject : When the Sovereign gives a Commission to any to act in his Name, the Commission comes through the Hands of the Keeper of the King's Seal, and it is sealed by him ; but neither the Keeper of the Seal, nor any of the Ministers of State, can recal the Commission, till the Sovereign declare his Mind and Will in this Matter : Even so, tho' our Commission to preach the Word of the Gospel comes to us through the Hands of them who are intrusted with the Keeping of the Seal of the King of Zion, yet no Power nor Authority upon Earth can recal our Commission, but according to the Mind and Will of the Head and King of the Church, declared in his Word unto his Church and People.

I am not convicted of any Thing before the Judicatories of this Church, either in Doctrine or Practice, contrary to the Word of God, our Confession of Faith, or Presbyterian Principles ; and
D there-

therefore it is my Duty to endeavour to fulfil that Ministry among you which I have received from the Lord, and to preach his Word out of Season, as well as in Season ; and all that I desire of you is, that you may pray for the Supplies of the Spirit of Jesus unto me, that I may be enabled unto the faithful Discharge of my Duty amongst you ; as also that you may receive the Word of Reconciliation which I am honoured to bear ; and that, whatever I may be exposed unto in the Discharge of my Duty, you may not be ashamed of my Bonds.

The Burgh of *Perth* was honoured, at the very Dawning of Reformation-light, first of all the Burghs in *Scotland*, to make a noble Stand for our Reformation-Rights and Privileges, in Opposition to the Idolatry and ecclesiastical Tyranny of the Church of *Rome*, under which the whole Land groaned at that Time ; and ye have distinguished yourselves in a zealous Concern for, and by a steady Adherence unto our civil and religious Liberties, particularly in the Year 1715. when many of you suffered Banishment from your own Habitations, and endured some other Hardships, after you were overpowered by Force and Violence, and obliged to give Way to the superior Number of those who came against you, and made this Place for some Time the Seat of their displayed Banner against the Revolution-Interest, our late Sovereign King *George*, and the Protestant Succession in his Royal Family.

But our good and gracious God did scatter these Clouds ; he restored you to your Habitations ; he preserved this Place, when some neighbouring Villages were laid in Ashes, and he has followed you since that Time with a Series and Train of remarkable Blessings : All these lay you under

under so many Obligations to a stedfast Perseverance in the Truths and Way of the Lord.

My present Situation may, I hope, apologize for the Length of this Preface : I intend not in it the Irritation of any, but to discharge myself of what I judge to be a Debt I owe to the People of my pastoral Charge in a particular Manner, whatever the Consequences of this whole Affair towards myself may be. As for the Discourse immediately following, my Design, in the several preachings on that Subject, was, according unto the Measure of the Grace of Christ given unto me, to recommend unto you the Faith of our Lord Jesus, and a stedfast Perseverance in the same.

That you may know the Truth as it is in Christ, and that you may be rooted and built up in him, and may be established in the Faith, is the Prayer of him

Who is one of your Pastors, more willing than able to serve you in the Work of the Gospel,

Perth, Sep. 22d,
1733.

WILLIAM WILSON.

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I COR. xvi. 13.

Watch ye, stand fast in the Faith, quit you like Men, be strong.

THE Words I have read are amongst the useful and necessary Directions given by the inspired Penman, the Apostle *Paul*, in the Conclusion of this his excellent Epistle to the *Corinthians*, and I hope they are suitable and proper for us to discourse unto you immediately after the solemn Profession of Subjection and Obedience unto the Lord Jesus. that many of you have made this Day in the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper. In this Verse the Spirit of God, by the Apostle recommends three necessary Duties unto the *Corinthians*, and in them unto us all, and every one who professes the Faith of the Lord Jesus, namely, Watchfulness, *Watch ye*; Stedfastness in the Faith, *stand fast in the Faith*; and Christian Courage and Resolution, whatever Dangers and Difficulties may be in our Way, *quit you like Men, be strong*.

The first Thing we are here exhorted to, is Watchfulness, *Watch ye*; this is a Duty frequently prest upon the Christian. After the first Celebration of this Sacrament our blessed Lord exhorts his Disciples unto it, *Matth. xxvi. 41. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation*: And this is necessary for the Christian at all Times; he has always Need to be upon his Watch-Tower, for he lives in the Midst of Snares; he is surrounded with Enemies, and exposed

posed to manifold Dangers and Difficulties, and he has the strong Remains of indwelling Sin in his own Heart ; therefore, *watch ye*. But I do not insist at this Time upon the Duty of Watchfulness, having spoken unto it on a former Occasion of this Nature.

The *second* Thing we are exhorted unto in this Verse, is Stedfastness in the Faith, *stand fast in the Faith*. There may be an Allusion in the Words to the Charge that is given to Soldiers when they are attacked by the Enemy. Every one that is a Christian indeed, is a Soldier under the Banner of Christ ; he goes a Warfare under the Conduct of the Captain of Salvation ; therefore *watch ye, stand fast in the Faith* : As if the Apostle had said, You have Enemies, and your Enemies will be upon you ; be on your Guard, stand firm, give not Way, but keep your Ground, whatever Opposition you may meet with ; and arm yourselves with a Courage and Resolution that becomes the good Cause you are engaged in, and the good Captain you fight under ; *quit you like Men, be strong*. It is the second Clause of the Verse I am now to discourse upon ; and the Doctrine I offer you is this,

That it is the Duty of the Christian, and it ought to be his Care and Concern, to stand fast in the Faith.

In discoursing this Doctrine, I shall, in the 1st Place, offer you some Remarks for clearing out Way upon this Subject. 2^{dly}. I will endeavour to shew you what you are exhorted unto, when you are called to stand fast in the Faith. 3^{dly}. Inquire what it is to stand fast. 4^{thly}. I shall give you the Reasons of the Doctrine. And, in the

last Place, make some practical Use and Application of the whole.

The *first* Thing proposed, is, To offer some few Remarks for paving our Way on this Subject.

In the *1st* Place, you may observe that Faith is taken diverse Ways in Scripture : As for Instance, sometimes it is taken for the Principles of Faith, or the Truths we are called to believe ; so, *Jude 3. Contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints.* Again, it is frequently taken for the Grace of Faith, and the Exercise thereof ; as, *Gal. ii. 3. The Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God.* I shall exclude none of these, but take them both in, in the Sequel of this Discourse. Tho' the Principles of Faith, or the Truths we ought to believe, seem to be here principally intended ; yet the Exercise of the Grace of Faith is a necessary and useful Mean in order to our Perseverance and Stedfastness in them.

2dly. The Christian's Faith is a valuable and precious Jewel. It is called *precious Faith*, *2 Pet. i. 1.* All the Truths of the Gospel that he believes are his Glory ; and his Stedfastness in them is his Crown, *Rev. iii. 11. Hold that fast which thou hast, that no Man take thy Crown.* True Christians have a common Denomination from their Faith : They are called *Believers* ; every one of them believe in an unseen Christ, *1 Pet. i. 8. Whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, tho' now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice, &c.* They all live by Faith upon Christ in his Word of Promise, *Heb. x. 38. Now the Just shall live by Faith.*

3dly. The Christian has many Adversaries unto his Faith. Hell and Earth, Devils and Men, are against

against the Christian's Faith. *Satan* endeavours all that he can, either to bereave him of it, or to weaken it; hence is that Warning given to *Peter*, Luke xxii. 31, 32. *Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat.* The Men of the World are also Enemies to the Faith of the Christian; the World hateth him, and his Faith too; yea, the World hateth him because of his Faith, *John* xv. 19. *Because ye are not of the World, but I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hateth you.*

4thly. You may observe that the Christian's Faith is many Times sore tried. It is tried by manifold Temptations, *1 Pet.* i. 6, 7. *If Need be, ye are in Heaviness through manifold Temptations: That the Trial of your Faith being much more precious than that of Gold that perisheth, &c.* All the Graces of the Christian are tried; his Love, his Patience and Submission are all tried: But Faith is the leading Grace, and therefore the Trials of the Christian are called the Trial of his Faith; his Faith is in a special Manner tried; and, if it stands out the Trial, all the other Graces of the Spirit will also come forth as Gold when it is tried. I shall here give some few particular Instances of the Temptations and Trials that the Christian's Faith meets with.

1. The Faith of the Christian is sometimes tried by cross Providences from the immediate Hand of God: So was *Abraham's* tried, when God commanded him to offer up the Son of the Promise, *Isaac*, *Gen.* xxii. 1. and his Faith stood firm under the Trial; for he accounted that God was able to raise him up even from the Dead: From whence also he received him in a Figure, *Heb.* xi. 19. The Christian's Faith is frequently tried by outward Afflictions

Afflictions from the immediate Hand of God, and also by inward Desertion : This was the Case of Job ; the Hand of God was upon his Body, and upon his Substance too ; the Lord did likewise hide his Face from him, *Job xxiii. 8, 9. Behold, I go foreward, but he is not there ; and backward, but I cannot perceive him : On the Left-Hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him : He hideth himself on the Right-Hand, that I cannot see him.* Yet his Faith stood firm under this Trial ; for, says he, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him, Job xiii. 15.*

2. The Christian's Faith is sore tried from the Temptations and fiery Darts of Satan. A Messenger of Satan was sent to buffet Paul, *2 Cor. xii. 7.* And there is nothing that Satan levels his Temptations so much against, as the Faith of the Christian ; he knows that if he prevails here, all is gained to his Side : Therefore, when Satan is permitted to sift Peter, Christ prayed for him, that his Faith might not fail, *Luke xxii. 32.*

3. The Christian's Faith is sore tried from the World. (1.) From the insnaring Pleasures and Profits of this World. So was the Faith of Moses tried ; when he was in Pharaoh's Court, all the Pleasures, Honours, and Preferments of the Court of Egypt were in his Offer ; yea, he had the Prospect of enjoying the Crown and Kingdom of Egypt : But his Faith triumphed over all these insnaring Allurements, *Heb. xi. 24. By Faith Moses, when he was come to Years, refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter, chusing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season.* (2.) From the Frowns and Reproaches of the World. Moses's Faith did likewise meet with this Trial. When he left the

Court of *Pharaoh*, and declared himself an *Israelite*, he joined himself to the Society of a contemptible and despised People, the Shepherds of *Goshen*, who were Servants and Slaves unto the *Egyptians*; and he behoved to lay his Account with all the Scorn, Contempt and Reproach that *Pharaoh* and his Court could throw upon him: Yet by Faith he overcame all this; for he esteemed the Reproach of *Christ* greater Riches than the Treasures of *Egypt*, *Heb. xi. 26.* Yea, not only did he overcome the Reproach and Scorn, but even the Fury and Rage of the King; *Ver. 27.* By Faith he forsook *Egypt*, not fearing the Wrath of the King: For he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. (3.) The Christian's Faith is frequently tried from the corrupt Doctrines that are in the World. Error is often propagated in the Church, in Opposition to the Truths of God; and the Tendency of it is to darken and overthrow Truth, and to shake the Faith of the Believers, *1 Cor. xi. 19.* For there must be also Heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest. (4) The Christian's Faith is sometimes tried by violent Persecution from the World; the Followers of *Christ* must lay their Account with it, to have their Faith tried by the worst Treatment the World can give them: So it was with the Cloud of Witnesses mentioned *Heb. xi. 36, 37.* They had Trial of cruel Mockings and Scourgings; yea, moreover, of Bonds and Imprisonments: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, &c. (5.) The Christian's Faith may be tried by severe and rough Treatment from those of the same Profession with them; they may pass harsh and severe Sentences against them. You have a remarkable Scripture to this Purpose, *Isa. lxvi. 5.* Your Brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my Name's Sake,

Sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified. See what the Trial is that those here mentioned met with; *they were hated and cast out*, that is, cast out of the Church, cast out of the Society of their Brethren; And by whom were they cast out? Not by open Enemies, but even by *their Brethren*, by those of the same Profession with themselves. And what is the Pretence for casting them out? They said, *Let the Lord be glorified.* Their Brethren, who did cast them out, did pretend a Regard to the Honour and Glory of God in so doing; yet the Spirit of God says it was for his *Name's Sake* that they were hated and cast out. I only observe from this, that there is something to be found in the Word of God that meets every Case that the Christian may be in: If the Faith of any shall be tried after this Manner, it may be encouraging to them in the Work of the Lord, and in the Way of their Duty, that others that have gone before them have met with the like Trial; the Case is not singular, for *there is no new Thing under the Sun.*

4. The Christian's Faith is sore tried, not only from the World, but likewise from himself; from the Remains of indwelling Sin within him; from the Atheism and Unbelief of his own Heart, *Heb. iii. 12. Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the living God.* There is a continual War in the Believer, he has the Company of *two Armies* within him, Atheism and Unbelief fight against his Faith, and sometimes Unbelief prevails, and carries him down the Stream, *Psal. cxvi. 11. I said in my Haste, All Men are Liars.* The Faith of the two Disciples was very low, and their Unbelief very strong, when they said, *Luke xxiv. 21. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: And beside all this,*

this, to-day is the third Day since these Things were done. But tho' Unbelief may prevail for a Time, yet Faith shall in the Issue get the Ascendant, *Micah vii. 8. Rejoice not against me, O mine Enemy : When I fall, I shall arise ; when I sit in Darknes, the Lord shall be a Light unto me.*

I proceed now to the second Thing proposed, *namely*, To shew you what it is you are called to stand fast in, when you are exhorted to stand fast in the Faith. And here I shall condescend on a few Things wherein you ought to stand fast.

1st. Stand fast in the Faith ; that is, stand fast in the Object of your Faith. Christ himself is the Object of the Christian's Faith ; to stand fast in the Faith, is to stand fast in the Lord, *Phil. iv. 1. Therefore, my Brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown, so stand fast in the Lord.* The Christian stands fast in Christ the Object of his Faith, (1.) When he keeps his Eye fixed upon him, when he lives habitually within Sight of him : So did *Moses*, he endured, as seeing him who is invisible, *Heb. xi. 27.* And so did *David*, when he says, *I have set the Lord always before me, Psalm xvi. 8.* (2.) The Christian stands fast in the Lord, when he maintains high and honourable Thoughts of him at all Times, and in all Cases. To stand fast in Christ the Object of Faith, it is to bless him when he takes, as well as when he gives : So did *Job*, *Chap. i. 21. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord.* It is to commend him when he frowns, as well as when he smiles : When he frowns, to say, He is holy, just and righteous, *Psalms xxii. 3. But thou art holy.* If any of you are this Day complaining that you have not found him to your Sense,

Sense, neither in the Word, nor at the Communion-Table, justify the Lord and condemn yourselves : If you are enabled to this, as it is a Sign that he is present unto your Faith, tho' absent as to your Sense ; so it will be some Evidence of the Steadfastness of your Faith. (3.) To stand fast in the Object of Faith, is to lean upon him who is the Rock and Strength of *Israel*. The Christian's Life ought to be a Life of constant Dependence upon the Lord Jesus, Song viii. 5, *Who is this that cometh up from the Wilderness leaning upon her Beloved?* Lean upon him for Strength and Furniture for all Duties of Obedience, and for Support under all your Difficulties : The Glory of your Strength is in him ; it is in his Strength that you must go on in your Christian Course ; you must walk up and down in his Name, Zech. x. 12.

2dly. Stand fast in the Principles of Faith ; that is, in all and every one of the Truths of God that you profess, and which you are called to believe. You ought to hold fast the Principles of Faith, especially when the Wind of Error blows, Eph. iv. 14. *Be no more Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the Sleight of Men, and cunning Craftiness, whereby they ly in Wait to deceive.* You ought to stand fast in the Truths of Christ, especially when they are opposed or controverted : As for Instance, If any of the Truths concerning the glorious Person of Christ are undermined, if his Supreme Deity and Necessary Existence are called in question, then we are boldly to own and avow the same ; if any of the Truths that concern the Offices of Christ are opposed, we ought to contend for them ; if the supernatural Teaching of the Spirit is cried down, then we ought to plead for it ; if the Righteousness of Faith is ob-
scured

feured or darkned, then we ought to stand up in
 the Defence of it; if the kingly Office of Christ
 is assaulted, then we ought to bear Testimony unto
 it: What concerns the kingly Office of Christ
 has been justly reckoned the Word of his Pati-
 ence given unto the Church of Scotland in a par-
 ticular Manner to contend for; and she has been
 honoured to bear Witness unto these and the like
 Truths, *That the Lord Jesus, and he alone, is King over*
Zion, the Hill of his Holiness; and that the Govern-
ment is laid upon his Shoulders, and that all the Vessels
his Father's House hang upon him; and likeways that he
 has the ordering of the Affairs of his own House in his
 own Hand, and the Office-Bearers must be given un-
 to his own Church and People according to the Rules
 that he himself has laid down in his own Word; and
 also that no lordly Dominion ought to be exercised
 over the Heritage and Flock of God: And there-
 fore, if Church-Authority is exercised beyond the
 Line of the Word, or in Contrariety unto the
 Laws and Institutions of Christ, the only Lord and
 Lawgiver unto his Church, it is not to be regard-
 ed. These are some of the Truths that concern
 the kingly Office of Christ; and, if any of them
 is opposed or denied, then a Testimony ought to
 be given unto them. Let Men esteem of it as they
 they will, it is not only Duty, but an honourable
 Thing, to give Testimony to the least of them, if
 I may speak so of any of the Truths of Christ.
 In a Word, whatever Truth is controverted and
 born down, to stand fast in the Faith, is to cleave
 to that Truth, and to give an open Testimony un-
 to the same, when we are called unto it. If you
 inquire, To whom belongs it to give Testimony
 unto controverted and opposed Truth? I answer,
 in the *first* Place, It ought to be given in a special
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Manner by the *Watchmen* that are set upon *Jerusalem's Walls*; they ought to *set their Face as a Flint* in their Master's Cause; they ought to be bold against all Opposition, in his Strength, and under his Conduct, who said, by the Prophet his Type, *Isa. 1. 7. For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded: Therefore have I set my Face like a Flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.* Ministers are the *Watchmen* set upon the Church's Walls; and, if they see Danger coming, they should speak, and not hold their Peace, *Isa. lxii. 6. I have set Watchmen upon thy Walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their Peace Day nor Night.* Tho' Men should threaten them, tho' Men should endeavour to shut and stop their Mouths, yet the Authority of the Lord Jesus obligeth them to speak, whatever Dangers they may be exposed unto. *2dly.* As the *Watchmen* of the City, so all the *Inhabitants* of the City of God ought, in their Stations, and when called unto it, to confess and bear Witness unto opposed Truth; *Zion, thy God confess.* If a Storm of Persecution shall break upon any of us for a Testimony that we have given against the Violence done to the Heritage of God at this Day, a Storm may also fall upon you; if the *Watchmen* of the City are driven from their Watch-Tower for their Faithfulness in the Discharge of their Duty, it is high Time for the *Inhabitants* of the City of God to look about them, and to fear least *the Enemy come in like a Flood* upon them: And if, when it comes to your Door, and when you are called unto it, you do not own and confess the Truths which you profess to believe, you betray Conscience and Principle too.

3dly. Stand fast in the Profession of your Faith, *Heb. x. 23. Let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith*

Faith without wavering. We make a Profession of Faith in our daily Attendance upon the Ordinances of the Gospel ; We all make a Profession of Faith in our Baptism ; when we are baptized, it is made by our Parents in our Name : And such of us as have come to a Communion-Table make a Profession of our Faith there : All of you who have been at the Lord's Table this Day have made a publick and solemn Profession of your Faith in a crucified Christ ; you have professed to receive the Testimony of God concerning him, and that you are well pleased with the Way of Salvation thro' him ; you have declared, by your sitting down at that Table, that you have chosen *Jehovah*, even a God in Christ, to be your Lord and your God, even him for your Husband and your Portion ; and that you are well pleased with the Lord Jesus as a Prophet to teach and instruct you, as a Priest to justify and save you by the Obedience of his Life and his Sufferings unto Death, and also as a King to reign and rule over you : You have professed to devote yourselves unto his Obedience and Service, and unto a Subjection unto his Laws, Ordinances and Institutions : Stand fast then in the Profession that you have made. And, if you would do so, *1st.* Walk like your Profession ; let your Conversation be like unto that holy Christian Profession that you have made, *Phil. i. 27.* *Only let your Conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ.* Let your Walk in your Families, and in our Streets, be like the Gospel of Christ ; be not conform to this World, but be you transformed by the Renewing of your Minds. If you conform yourselves to the sinful and vain Customs and Fashions of this World, you depart in so far from the Profession of your Faith. *2dly.* Be not ashamed

ed of your Profession. To stand fast in the Profession of your Faith, is to own Christ and his Words, and not to be ashamed of them when they are reviled, despised and reproached. It has been observed in the Church, that there is a Multitude of Professors in a fair Day, and in a cloudy and stormy Day a Multitude of Apostates from their Profession. Some make the Religion that is uppermost in the World theirs; the Way that's most in Vogue, and least obnoxious to Censure, they chuse that, and fall in with it: But, if you stand fast in the Profession of your Faith, you will not be ashamed of Christ and his Words, whatever your Profession may expose you unto, *Mark viii.*

38. *Whoſoever therefore ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my Words, in this adulterous and ſinful Generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father with the holy Angels.*

4thly. Stand fast in the Ground of your Faith. What is the Ground and Bottom upon which the Christian's Faith leans? It is even the Testimony of God in his own Word. The Faith of the Christian is built upon the Faithfulness of God; for he reckons him *faithful that hath promised*: The Veracity and Truth of God in his promising Word is the only Pillar and Ground of saving Faith: And if ever you have believed, it is upon the Testimony of God in his Word, evidencing itself by the powerful Energy of his Spirit unto your Minds, *Your Faith ſtands not in the Wiſdom of Men, but in the Power of God, 1 Cor. ii. 5.* To stand fast in the Faith, is to cleave to the Testimony of God, and to credit his Word of Promise, when Sense fails you, and when Clouds and Darkneſs ſurround you. The Bottom and Ground of the Christian's

Faith stands always firm and sure, even when the Floods lift up their Voice, when the Floods lift up their Waves : *Thy Testimonies are very sure*, Psalm xlii. 3, 5. The Christian may stand upon sure Ground, even upon the Testimony of God, in the Midst of the raging Waves and Billows of Temptations from Satan, and of cross Dispensations of Providence from without, *Rom. iv. 20. He staggered not at the Promise of God through Unbelief.*

5thly. Stand fast in the Root of Faith. The Lord Jesus himself is the Root of the Christian's Faith : Faith springs from him, for it is the Fruit of the *exceeding Greatness of his Power*, Eph. i. 19. Also Christ is the Root into which the Believer is ingrafted, and it is by the Means of Faith that he has a Being in him. Christ is the Root of all vital Influences unto the Believer : All the Believer's spiritual Nourishment and Sap, his spiritual Verdure, Beauty and Fruitfulness, are from Christ his Root. To stand fast in the Root Christ, is the same Thing with abiding in him, *John xv. 4. Abide in me.* The Christian abides in Christ, by deriving vital Influences from him daily : As the Branches have all their Sap and Nourishment from the Root, so your spiritual Life must be maintained by a daily Communication of spiritual Nourishment from your Root Christ.

6thly. Stand fast in the Fruits of Faith. Where true Faith is, it brings forth Fruit : *Faith without Works* is but a *dead Faith*, *James ii. 26.* All Duties of Obedience unto the Law of God, when performed in a right Manner, are the Fruits of Faith, and the Christian ought to abound in these, *John xv. 8.* The Fruits of the Spirit, mentioned *Gal. v. 22.* are the Fruits of Faith. The Christian must not rest satisfied in any Measure of Fruitfulness

fulness he has attained unto, but he ought to increase and grow in Fruitfulness, *2 Pet. iii. 18. Grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. i. 5. Giving all Diligence, add to your Faith, Virtue; and to Virtue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, brotherly Kindness; and to brotherly Kindness, Charity: For if these Things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

7thly. Stand fast in the Exercise of Faith. Faith must be exercised daily: If it is not exercised, the inward Principle of Grace is weakened, and the Christian withers and decays, *Heb. x. 38. Now the Just shall live by Faith; but if any Man draw back, &c. He lives by the daily Exercise of Faith; and if Faith fails in its Exercise, the Christian draws back, he falls from his Stedfastness.*

8thly. Stand fast in the Hopes and Expectations of Faith. The Expectations of Faith are great and large: Faith expects all the good Things that are contained in the Word of Promise, *Rom. viii. 32. How shall he not with him also freely give us all Things?* Faith looks out for Access unto God, and Acceptance in his Sight, through the Lord Jesus. This is that Confidence of Faith which we ought not to cast away, *Heb. x. 35. It looks out for Support and Through-bearing under all Difficulties, Psalm xxiii. 4. Yea, tho' I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil, for thou art with me. It looks out for complete Deliverance from all Sin and all Sorrow, and for a complete Victory over all spiritual Enemies. Faith says, In all these Things we are more than Conquerors through him that lov-*

ved us. Faith looks out for a Glory to be revealed hereafter, even for the *Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for all the Children of Promise*: Quid not then with the Hopes and Expectations of Faith, for these do animate the Christian under the greatest Difficulties, *Rom. v. 2. We rejoice in Hope of the Glory of God.*

I proceed now to the *third* Thing proposed, To shew you what it is to stand fast in the Faith, or, to open up a little the Duty of *Stedfastness* that you are here exhorted unto. I shall observe two Things that are implied in it, and then shew you what it is to stand fast in the Faith.

First, To stand fast implies that the Christian may be *fore thrust at*, that he may depart from his *Stedfastness* in the Faith. He has a Multitude of Enemies against him, and his Enemies want neither Power, nor Malice, nor Subtilty; they have Power to annoy the Christian, and they bear a malicious Disposition against him: The old Serpent and all his Seed have an inveterate Enmity at the Seed of the Woman, and they want not Subtilty and Cunning to ensnare the Christian. And here you may observe, *1st*. That the Christian is many Times fore thrust at by his malicious Enemy *Satan*. Hence saith the Apostle, *1 Pet. v. 8. Be sober, be vigilant; for your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.* He knows well the Christian's weak Side, and he is ready to attack them there. Whatever is a Man's predominant Sin, whatever is the Sin that doth easily beset him, Is it Pride? Is it Love to the World, or the like? *Satan* will adapt his Temptations to it, *2 Cor. ii. 11. We are not ig-*
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rant of his Devices. 2dly. The Christian is sore thrust at from the wicked Men of this World, *Psalms cxviii. 13. Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall.* He may lay his Account with the worst Names that Men can give him : *If they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his Household ?* *Matth. x. 25.* He may lay his Account with the Fury and Rage of Men against him. The Head and Captain of Salvation cried out, in his Type, *Psalms xxii. 13. They gaped upon me with their Mouths, as a ravening and roaring Lion.* If the Head met with such Treatment from the World, his Followers need not expect any better : Yea, our Lord has forewarned all his Disciples what they are to meet with from the World, *John xvi. 2. They shall put you out of their Synagogues ; yea, the Time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God good Service.* 3dly. The Christian meets with sore Thrusts from indwelling Sin. The Apostle Paul had the Experience of the violent Thrusts of this Enemy, *Rom. vii. 21, 23. I find then a Law, that when I would do Good, Evil is present with me. I see another Law in my Members, warring against the Law of my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin which is in my Members.*

Secondly, The Charge to stand fast implies, that the Christian is in Danger of losing Ground, and falling before the Enemy. One that is in Christ cannot fall totally nor finally away, yet he is in Danger of losing his Ground : he is in Hazard of such Falls as may dishonour God, and bring a Reproach upon his holy Profession, and break his own Peace : As for Instance, in the first Place, He is in Danger of departing from the Profession of his Faith. Peter made a noble Confession, *Matth. xvi. 16,*

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Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And a great Testimony is given by Christ unto this his Confession in the 17th Verse: But how did he fall from it, when at the Vioce of a Maid he denied him with an Oath, and said, *I know not the Man?* Matth. xxvi. 72. 2dly. The Christian is in Danger of departing from the *Fruits* of his Faith: The Falls and Sins of eminent Saints are sad Instances of this; and they are recorded in Scripture, not to encourage us to sin, but as Warnings unto us; they are set up as so many Beacons to guard us against splitting upon these dangerous Rocks. Yea, 3dly. the Christian is in Danger of losing the *Evidences* and *Expectations* of his Faith; he may lose Sight of his Interest in Christ, and may lose his Hope of eternal Life, *Jonah*, ii. 3, 4. *All thy Billows and thy Waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy Sight.* These and many such Things are implied in this solemn Call here given unto us, to stand fast in the Faith.

I proceed now to shew you what it is to stand fast in the Faith. I answer in general, It is the Christian's vigorous and resolute Endeavours, in the Strength of the Lord Jesus, and in the Use of all the Means appointed by him, to keep his Ground against his spiritual Enemies. But, more particularly,

1st. To stand fast in the Faith, is to stand in a *watching* Posture. These two are joined together, *Watch ye, stand fast in the Faith.* Watchfulness is absolutely needful in order to our Stedfastness; the Christian must stand upon his Watch-Tower, *Hab.* ii. 1. *I will stand upon my Watch.* He must watch all the Motions and Approaches of the Enemy, that he may cry out unto the Head and Captain of his

his Salvation for Grace to help him in the Day and Time of his Need

2dly. To stand fast, is to stand in a *fighting* Posture; it is to be ready to fight the Enemy, to resist the Assaults, and to repel the Violence of the Enemy, 1 Pet. v. 9. *Whom resist, stedfast in the Faith.* The Christian must take the whole Armour of God, that he may be able to withstand in the evil Day; and he must do all to stand, Eph. vi. 13. The Christian's Standing imports his Fighting, and his Fighting imports his using Armour. The Enemies the Christian has to deal with are spiritual, even *Principalities and Powers, the Rulers of the Darknefs of this World*; and the Weapons of his Warfare are spiritual; the Armour, both offensive and defensive, is spiritual, namely, *the Girdle of Truth, the Breast-Plate of Righteousness, the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit.*

3dly. To stand fast, is to stand in a *suffering* Posture, that is, to be in a Readiness to suffer for the Truth when we are called unto it; to be ready to suffer the Loss of all Things for Christ; the Loss of our outward Peace and Ease, of our Goods and Substance, when these may come in Competition with any of the Truths of Christ; yea, to be willing to part with Life itself for Christ. The Christian stands and keeps his Ground when he suffers; yea, in his Sufferings unto Death, he *overcomes by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of his Testimony*, Rev. xii. 11.

4thly. To stand fast, is to *persevere* in our Christian Work and Warfare, Matth. xxiv. 13. *He that shall endure unto the End, the same shall be saved.* The Christian must stand, and neither fall back, nor give over; he must stand, and not sit down; he must fight, and not faint: *If thou faint in Day*
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of Adversity, thy Strength is small, Prov. xxiv 10. The Christian must hold on his Way, Job. xvii. 9. The Righteous also shall hold on his Way, and he that hath clean Hands shall be stronger and stronger.

5thly. To stand fast, is the Christian's Endeavour to keep his Ground in the Use of all appointed Means, such as reading and hearing the Word, Meditation, Self-Examination, and the like. The Duty of Prayer is likewise a special Mean of Stedfastness in the Faith ; therefore, when the Apostle directs us to the different Pieces of our Christian Armour, he recommends Prayer as a notable and useful Weapon for the Christian, *Eph. vi. 18. Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perseverance and Supplication for all Saints.*

I proceed now to the *fourth* Thing proposed, *namely,* To give you the Reasons of the Doctrine : Why is it that the Christian ought to stand fast in the Faith ?

1st. This is what your glorious Head and Leader requires and expects from you. It is his positive and expresse Command unto you, *Watch ye, stand fast in the Faith.* This is what may be reasonably expected from you : If you are under the Banner of Christ, ye are taken as a Prey out of the Hand of the terrible One ; your Head and Captain-General has delivered your Soul from Death, he has rescued you unto his own Side out of the Hand of Satan, he has set you apart for himself, and separated you by his Grace from the rest of the World ; therefore it may be expected that ye should be stedfast unto him.

2dly. Unstedfastness dishonours God much, and therefore provokes him greatly. It brings a Reproach upon the Holiness and Truth of God : It dishonours

dishonours him before the World, and brings a Blot upon our holy Profession; therefore it must be very provoking unto him, *Psal. lxxviii. 57, 59. They turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their Fathers; they were turned aside like a deceitful Bow. When God heard this, he waxed wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel.*

3dly. We ought to stand fast in the Faith, because it is a dangerous Thing to lose Ground: *If any Man draw back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him.* The least Departing from the Profession of our Faith is dangerous, the least Declining from the Way of God is an Inlet to more. *Daniel* was very tender in this Matter, when he prayed with his Windows open, *Dan. vi. 10.* notwithstanding of the severe Edict and Command of the King. One might readily have said, It was not prudent for him so to do; Might he not have prayed with his Windows shut? If he opened his Windows to direct his Face towards *Jerusalem*, the Place where the Temple stood, Were there not many Mountains betwixt him and *Jerusalem*, and might he not have directed his Face towards that Place with his Windows shut, as well as with his Windows open? But this was the Case: He had made an open Profession of worshipping *Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*; and, if he had shut his Windows upon the Commandment of the King, he had departed from that publick Profession. The primitive Christians were also very tender of departing from the Profession they had made of their Faith: When their Heathen Persecutors required them to deliver up their Bibles, they refused; when they required them to deliver a Leaf of their Bibles, they refused this also; and when they offered them their Lives upon delivering any Bit of Paper unto them, neither would they

they yield unto this, because it was required as a Sign of their giving up with their Christian Cause and Confession.

4thly. To stand fast in the Faith, is the Way to thrive and prosper in the Faith. The stedfast Christian is always a thriving Christian; he has most of inward Peace and Serenity in his own Mind; he has most of Nearness to God, and spiritual Joy in him; and truly the Joy that the People of God sometimes find in cleaving to the Way of the Lord, they would not part with it for all the World's Mirth and Laughter; and the Peace that they find in the Way of the Lord, they would not quit with it for all the Pleasures and Profits of a vain perishing World; it is a Peace *that passeth all Understanding*, Philip. iv. 7.

I proceed now to the *practical Use and Improvement* of this Subject.

Inf. 1st. If it be so, that it is the Duty of the Christian, and ought to be his Care and Concern to stand fast in the Faith, hence we may see, that a Christian has more to do than to make an outward Profession of Faith. Many make an outward Profession of Faith, and this is all they have, this is all they seek after; but, if you would be Christians indeed, something more is needful; you must be in the Faith, and you must stand fast in the Faith. It is an easy Thing to make the outward Profession, and to yield an outward Subjection unto the Ordinances of the Gospel, to hear the Word, and to communicate; but something more is required of you; you must stand in a watching and fighting Posture if the Lord shall call you unto it.

2dly. Hence see the Sin of Unstedfastness in the Faith. If it is your Duty to stand fast, it must be your Sin to draw back. You that have made

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solemn Profession of Faith at the Communion-Table, take heed lest you draw back. I shall here give you some Evidences of Unstedfastness in the Faith. 2dly. I shall shew you the Sinfulness of it.

In the *first* Place, it is an Evidence of Unstedfastness in the Profession of Faith, when Men turn more remiss and slack in spiritual Duties. It may be you have been frequent in Prayer, and have had something of Fervency in it before the Communion: It is true, solemn Work requires solemn and serious Preparation; but, if you turn formal and negligent in Family and secret Prayer after the Communion, it will be a sad Evidence of your Unstedfastness: The Christian ought to be *praying always with all Prayer and Supplication*; he ought to endeavour to maintain a praying Frame, and to lay hold upon every proper Opportunity for pouring out his Soul before the Lord, *Psalms cxix. 164. Seven Times a Day do I praise thee.*

If you turn unwatchful over yourselves after a Communion, it is an Evidence of your Unstedfastness. It is like that for some Days before the Communion you have kept some Guard over your Words, and over your outward Behaviour; if after the Communion you go from your Watch over yourselves, you turn away from the Profession of your Faith. The Christian must be on his Guard at all Times; he must watch continually over his Heart, over his Words and Actions; he must watch over himself in his Buying and Selling, in his Trading and Trafficking, in his Eating and Drinking; in every Thing that you do, in the whole of your Walk and Behaviour, you must stand upon your Watch-Tower, *Matth. xxiv. 42.*

3dly. If your Affections towards the Lord turn more cool, it is an Evidence of your Unstedfastness.

ness. I do not say a Communion-Frame will last always, yet the Christian ought to have his Affections habitually set upon the Things that are above, *Col. iii. 2.* A Communion-Ordinance is given you to quicken and increase your Love to the Lord Jesus, as well as to strengthen the other Graces of the Spirit: You ought to have a growing Esteem of him, habitual Desires after him, and a constant Delight in him; ye ought to express your Love unto him by frequent Thinking upon him, *Psalms lxiii. 6.* *When I remember thee upon my Bed, and meditate on thee in the Night-Watches.* And your Love should be expressed more especially in your religious Duties: If you are carnal in your ordinary Walk, and formal and coldrise in Prayer and other Duties, it is an Evidence of your Unstedfastness in the Profession of your Faith.

4thly. When Unbelief gets the Ascendant over the Christian, it is a Sign of his Unstedfastness. It may be you have said at the Communion-Table, *My Lord, and my God.* It may be you have said, Let me never call in question his loving Kindness again; let me never doubt of the Truth and Veracity of his Word of Promise: But take heed to yourselves, your Faith in a little may be at as low an Ebb as ever, and your Unbelief as strong as ever. After the first Communion, all the Disciples said, *John xvi. 30.* *Now we are sure that thou knowest all Things; by this we believe that thou camest forth from God:* But where was their Faith, when that same very Night one of them denied him, and all of them forsook him and fled?

5thly. It is likewise an Evidence of Unstedfastness in the Faith, when Men waver about the Truths they profess to believe, or depart from the Profession

Profession of them, upon Temptations that are cast in their Way. Some have itching Ears after new Things ; others are tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine ; they are still halting betwixt two, and are never at any Fixedness or Certainty about the Principles they profess to believe : Some again are soon shaken in their Minds ; the Frowns of Men, or the Flatteries of Men, will easily turn them away from their Profession ; and frequently, upon a Pretence that this and the other Truth is not essential unto Salvation, they persuade themselves that they may let it go. It is true, some Truths are of greater Moment and Importance than others, but every Truth of God is worthy to be contended for, *Matth. v. 18.* *For verily I say unto you, till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one Tittle shall in no ways pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled.* If you depart from any of the Truths of Christ, out of Regard to Man, or for Fear of Man, you discover Unstedfastness in the Faith.

That you may be guarded against Unstedfastness in the Profession of Faith that you have made, let me now lay before you a few Considerations concerning the exceeding Sinfulness of it. 1st. It is a Giving the Lie unto your Profession. You have made a solemn Profession of Faith at a Communion-Table ; but, if you fall back, it is an Evidence your Profession was not sincere : It says, that you were *lying unto the God of Truth with your Tongues, and flattering him with your Lips, Psalm lxxviii. 36.* 2^{dly}. It is contrary to the Vows and Engagements that you have come under. You have avouched the Lord at the Communion-Table to be your God : You have said, I will be for him, and not for another : If you now turn unwatchful over yourselves,

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if you turn loose or untender in your Walk and Conversation, you walk contrary unto the Vows and Engagements you have professed to come under, and this will be no small Aggravation of your Sin. *3dly.* Unstedfastness in the Faith exposeth Religion and the Way of God before a wicked World. If you that are Communicants go alongst with them in their sinful Courses and Fashions, Will they not blaspheme in their Hearts, if not with their Mouths, the good Way of the Lord? Will they not be hardned in their Atheism and Unbelief? They may be tempted to think and say that there is no Truth nor Reality in Religion, when the Professors of it walk like themselves; and, by reason of your Unstedfastness, the Way of Truth shall be evil spoken of, *2 Pet. ii. 1.* *4thly.* It will be wounding to the truly Godly: It cannot but be grieving and affecting unto them, when they see the lax and careless Walk and Conversation of such as have made a solemn Profession of Faith in Christ, and Love towards him. *5thly.* Your Unstedfastness will bring the Lord's Displeasure upon yourselves, and he may be provoked to manifest his Displeasure against you, by temporal Strokes upon you, *1 Cor. xi. 30.* *For this Cause many are sickly and weak among you, and many sleep;* that is, for unworthy Communicating, and no doubt for the unsuitable Walk and Behaviour of Communicants: If you escape temporal Strokes, you will readily fall under spiritual Judgments; the Lord may be provoked to cease to be a Reprover unto you, and to leave you unto your own Counsels, to walk in your own Ways.

I proceed to a *second Use* of the Doctrine, and it shall be by Way of Trial and Examination, Is it the

the Duty of the Christian to stand fast in the Faith ? Then try whether or not you are in the Faith. You have need to try yourselves after a Communion, as well as before it ; and it is very needful that you try yourselves on this Head : For, if you are not in the Faith, you can never stand fast in it : If you have not the Faith of our Lord Jesus in Truth and Reality, you can never hold fast the Profession of your Faith without wavering. I shall here offer you some particular Characters of such as are in the Faith, and by these you may examine and try yourselves.

1st. If you are in the Faith, the Word of the Gospel has come unto you, *not in Word only, but also in Power*, 1 Thess. i. 5. The Preaching of the Gospel of Christ has been the Power of God, through the Efficacy of his Spirit, unto your Conviction and Conversion ; the Word of the Gospel has come with convincing Power unto you ; the Spirit of the Lord has set the Lamp of his own Word within thy Heart, and he hath discovered unto thee the great Abominations that are there, the dreadful Corruption and Depravation of thy Nature, and thy Transgressions wherein thou hast exceeded : Thou hast got a Discovery of the natural Enmity of thy Heart against God, and of the exceeding Evil that is in the Sin of Unbelief, a Sin that binds all thy other Sins and Transgressions upon thee, *John xvi. 8, 9. And when he is come, he will reprove the World of Sin : Of Sin, because they believe not on me.* The Word has also come with humbling Power unto you ; your lofty Looks have been brought low, your high and self-exalting Thoughts have been brought down, thou hast seen thyself more vile and loathsome in the Sight of a holy God than the vilest Insect can be in thy Sight :

Sight: The Discovery that thou hast 'got of thy Sinfulness and Vileness has filled thee with self-abasing and self-loathing Thoughts, *Ezek. xxxvi. 31. Then shall ye remember your own evil Ways, and your Doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own Sight, for your Iniquities and for your Abominations.* The Word has likewise come with Light, giving Efficacy unto you, revealing Christ the Object of Faith within you: Thou hast got a Glimpse of his Glory, and seen him in his Person and Offices, as a full, able and complete Saviour; as One every Way meet for thy miserable, lost, and perishing State and Condition, *2 Cor. iv. 6.*

2dly. If you are in the Faith, you have given the Obedience of Faith unto the Doctrine of the Gospel, *Rom. vi. 17. Ye have obeyed from the Heart that Form of Doctrine which was delivered you.* If you are in the Faith, you have given the Obedience of Faith unto the Word of the Gospel in the three following Instances. 1st. You have received the Truths of the Gospel upon the Testimony of the God of Truth. Faith is a Receiving of his Testimony, *John iii. 33. He that hath received his Testimony, hath set to his Seal, that God is true.* Saving Faith leans to the Truth and Veracity of God in his own Word. Good Education is a good Mean for beginning and promoting the Work of Faith: But the Faith of all such as believe unto Salvation is bottomed upon the Word of the living God, and not upon the Testimony of Men: They do not believe because they were educated and brought up in the Knowledge of the Truths of the Gospel, but they receive Gospel-Truth upon the Testimony of him who is Truth itself. As this is, a firm and sure Ground for Faith to bottom upon, so
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the Spirit of God sets home his own Testimony with abundant Light and Evidence upon the Minds of all that believe; for the Gospel comes not unto them *in Word only, but also in Power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much Assurance*, 1 Thess. i. 5. Moral Arguments for the Truth of Christianity are very useful in their own Place, not only to stop the Mouths of the Adversaries of our holy Religion, but also as Means to help forward the Work of Faith: But saving Faith stands not in the Wisdom of Men, it is not built upon the Reasonings of Men; but it stands upon the Power of God, that is, in the Testimony of the God of Truth, powerfully evidencing itself to the Minds all that believe, 1 Cor. ii. 5. This is a Mystery to the Learned of the World that have not learned Christ; therefore some of them abuse and reproach it: But, tho' they should do so, we preach the Doctrine of *Christ crucified, unto the Jews a Stumbling-Block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. adly, If you have given the Obedience of Faith unto the Doctrine of the Gospel, you have embraced the Promises, and Christ himself in the Word of Promise. Faith is an embracing of the Promises, *Heb. xi. 13*. The Arms of Faith, so to speak, are wide and large: Faith embraces all the Promises, and him who is *All in all* the Promises. Nothing can fill the Arms of Faith but Christ himself; it is a receiving of him, *John i. 12*. *To as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God*. The Arms of Faith embrace him for Righteousness unto Justification, and for Strength unto Sanctification, *Isa. xlv. 24*. *Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I*

Righteousness and Strength. Faith receiveth Christ as the Gospel-Promise exhibits and offers him, even a whole Christ, as the only and great Ordinance of infinite Wisdom for Salvation unto the perishing Sinner, from the Guilt, from the Power, from the Filth and Being of Sin, for Deliverance from everlasting Wrath, and for a Right and Title unto everlasting Glory. 3dly. If you are in the Faith, you have given the Obedience of Faith unto the Commands and Precepts of the Word. All the Precepts of the Law are the Commandments of a God in Christ unto the Believer : He receives the Law out of the Hands of him who is Zion's King and Lord : All the Commands of it are his Commandments unto his Subjects, and they are enforced upon them with the powerful and strong Arguments of his dying and redeeming Love ; and Obedience to them is required as an Evidence of their Love unto him, *John xiv. 15. If you love me, keep my Commandments.* The Believer gives the Obedience of Faith unto the Commandments of Christ, by devoting himself unto the Fear and Obedience of the Lord Jesus ; he loves the whole Law of God, because it is, a Transcript of the Purity and Holiness of God, *Psalms cxix. 140. Thy Word is very pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it.* The Law is holy, the Commandment holy, just and good ; therefore the Believer breathes after Conformity unto it, *Psalms cxix. 5. O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes.*

3dly. If you are in the Faith, you are formed and framed according unto the Doctrine of Faith : *Ye are God's Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus,* *Eph. ii. 10.* The framing of the Heart according to the Truth of the Gospel, is expressed by the Lord's putting his Law in the inward Parts, and

and writing it in the Heart, Jer. xxxi. 33. And this is that Truth in the inward Parts in which the Lord delights, *Psalms* li. 6. When the Heart is formed according to the Truth of the Gospel, there is a supernatural Principle and Disposition implanted in the Man, whereby he is disposed and inclined to love the Lord, and to yield Obedience to his commanding and providential Will, to honour and to glorify God, to value and esteem all the Truths of Christ : Every one of them bulk more in the Man's Eye than the whole Creation beside. If any of the Truths of God were laid in the Balance, they would, in his Esteem, weigh down every other Thing : A Heart fashioned according unto the Faith, is the Heart that is right with God. Some speak of a good Heart towards God, of a sincere Heart, and the like, but they know not what they are saying : The Heart that is right with the Lord, is the Heart that is sanctified by the Word of Faith ; it is a Heart that is purified by the Faith of the Operation of God ; it is the Heart that is humbled and meekened by the Word of Truth : If you have not this Heart within you, you are Strangers to saving Faith.

4thly. Every one that is in the Faith, is a Martyr for it in Resolution. The Christian dares promise nothing in his own Strength, but he can promise much on the Head of his Surety, *Phil.* iv. 13. *I can do all Things through Christ which strengthneth me.* When the Christian comes under the Banner of Christ, he resolves to follow him through good Report and bad Report, through Honour and Dishonour ; to appear in his Station for the Truths of Christ, if they should be opposed and born down ; and to follow Christ in a stormy Day, as well as in a fair Day ; when the World frowns,

as

as well as when it smiles, upon his Christian Profession.

I come now to the *last* Use of the Doctrine, and this shall be in a Word to three Sorts of Persons. *1st.* To such as have a Profession of Faith, and no more. *2dly.* To such as are young Beginners in the Faith. *3dly.* To all and every one of you that have made a solemn Profession of Faith, especially to such as have the Faith of our Lord Jesus in Truth and in Reality.

1st. I shall speak to such as have a Profession of Faith, and no more. We have Ground to fear that many have made a solemn Profession of Faith in a crucified Christ at a Communion-Table, who are Strangers to him, and who know him not, and who have none of the Characters that we have just now given of those that are in the Faith. I shall offer two or three Things for your Conviction, and then address you in a Word by Way of *Exhortation*. In order unto your Conviction, consider, in the *first* Place, that your Profession is little worth, and it will do you but little Service, if you have not the Faith of our Lord Jesus in Truth and in Reality. Your Profession will not carry you through in the Day of your Strait, it will never bring you to Heaven: Yea, if you are looking and hoping for Heaven, you will meet with a sad Disappointment in the End. Your State and Condition will be the same with that of the foolish Virgins in the Parable, who had Lamps, but no Oil in their Lamps: And when they say, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, he answers them, *Verily, I say unto you, I know you not.* And tho' you may say in that Day, *We have eaten and drunk in thy Presence;* yet he shall say unto you, *I tell you, I know you not*
whence

whence you are : *Depart from me, all ye Workers of Iniquity, Matth. xxv. 11, 12. Luke xiii. 26, 27.*
 2dly. It is a dangerous Thing to have a Profession of Religion, and no more : You run the greatest Risque, for Publicans and Harlots will enter into the Kingdom of God before proud, self righteous Professors, *Matth. xxi. 31.* A dreadful Hell and a horrible Eternity abide you ; you will meet with a sad Surprise in the End, *Isa. xxxiii. 14. The Sinners in Zion are afraid, Fearfulness hath surprised the Hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring Fire ? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting Burnings ?*

Let me now address you in a Word by Way of *Exhortation* ; and our Exhortation unto you is, O be concerned to have the Faith of our Lord Jesus in Truth and in Reality. As you are Christians by Profession, study to be Christians indeed : And you that have been at a Communion-Table, study to know a saving Faith in him in whom ye have professed Faith after such a solemn Manner. In order to this I offer you the following Advices ;
 1st. Be convinced of your Unbelief ; all that believe in the Lord Jesus have been convinced of their Unbelief, *John xvi. 9.* A Sight of the Unbelief of the Heart may be a Mean, through the Blessing of the Lord, to obtain the Spirit of Faith.
 2dly. Consider, that tho' you are destitute of Faith, yet you may obtain it. All that have Faith once wanted it ; none of them were born Believers : It is by their new Birth that all of them become Believers. Those that have Faith were once under the Power of Unbelief as you are ; they were once as dark and blind as you are, they were as much alienated from the Life of God as you are : *But God, who is rich in Mercy, quickned them when dead in Trespases and Sins, Eph. ii. 4, 5.*
 3dly. Consider from whom

whom it is that you may obtain the Grace of Faith : It is given by the Lord Jesus, he is the Author and Finisher of Faith : He begins the Work of Faith, and he carries it on. Faith is the Gift, even the free *Gift of God*, Eph. ii. 8. 4thly. Attend upon the Means by which Faith is wrought. The Word preached is one special Mean of Faith, Rom. x. 17. *Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God.* Look unto him who is the Author of Faith, that he may work Faith in you. Come with your atheistical and unbelieving Heart unto him, he promiseth freely the Spirit and Grace of Faith. The Spirit of Faith is in that Promise, *I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty, and Floods upon the dry Ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thine Offspring. One shall say, I am the Lord's*, Isa. xlv. 3, 5. The Grace of Faith is in that Promise, *A new Heart also will I give unto you, and a new Spirit will I put within you : And I will take away the stony Heart out of your Flesh, and I will give you an Heart of Flesh*, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Look unto the Lord for the Grace that is in the Promise ; Prayer is an appointed and instituted Mean for the obtaining of it. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the House of Israel, to do it for them*, Verse 37. If you were crying under a Sense of Unbelief for the Spirit and Grace of Faith, it would be a Token for Good, that the Seed of Faith is already sown by the Holy Ghost in your Hearts.

I come, in the *second* Place, to speak a Word to young Beginners in the Faith. Several have been at the Communion-Table in this Place, who were never Communicants formerly ; and some of you have begun in young Years to make a fair Profession of Faith in the Lord Jesus. Faith, in its first

Begin.

Beginnings, is often like a Grain of Mustard-Seed, both tender and weak, and scarce discernible. We have it in our Commission to strengthen the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees ; to encourage you that are beginning to set out in the Way of the Lord : And our Heart's Desire for you is, that you may stand fast in the Faith of Christ, being rooted and grounded in him. Let me then address you that are of the younger Sort, especially such of you as have been at a Communion-Table : If there are any young Motions of Heart among you towards the Lord Jesus Christ, if there is any young Sense of the Need of Christ, or any young Desires after him, if there are any Outgoings of Faith upon him, I would suggest the following Things unto you.

1st. Look well to it, that any Work that is begun in you be real and saving : And for this End examine and try yourselves ; try if Christ is formed within you. A wrong Cast at your first Outsetting in the Way of the Lord is dangerous, and may stick to you all your Days : If you sit down upon a wrong Foundation, all your Building will fall to the Ground, it will not stand when the Winds blows and the Rains descend, *Matth. vii.* 27. If ye have been under Convictions, take heed lest ye *stay long in the Place of the breaking forth of Children*, *Hos. xiii. 13.* Many have Convictions who were never converted. If your Convictions have been genuine and kindly, you have found no resting Place for you, but on the Foundation-Stone that is laid in *Zion* : If your Convictions have had a gracious Issue, you have found no Peace, no Quiet, but in the Blood of Jesus, applied and brought home by the Spirit of God through Faith in his Name. The Blood of Christ
is

is the only effectual Balm for that Wound that the Law makes in the Conscience.

2dly. Bless God for any young Beginnings that are with you. If the Lord has been dealing with you by his Spirit in a Work of Conviction and gracious Illumination, O give Thanks unto him for it. They are highly favoured and privileged who are reached by the Grace of Christ at any Time, but more especially such who are prevented by his Grace in their younger Years : He stops the Course and Current of their Rebellion against him early, and enables them to glorify him, by giving the Beginning of their Days, and the Prime and Flower of their Love unto him, who is altogether lovely, and who alone is worthy to be loved : The Kindness of thy Youth, and the Love of thy Espousals shall be remembred, and shall not be forgotten, Jer. ii. 2.

3dly. You have Reason to be on your Guard, and to take heed to yourselves : For Satan will endeavour to crush any begun Appearances of the Work of the Lord within you ; he will do all that he can to snub any young spiritual Growth that is within you ; lay your Account with it, that he will lay Snares for you, and beset you with his Temptations. No sooner do any set their Faces towards Christ, than Satan raiseth a Storm against them ; and he may raise a Storm against you, from some Airth that you are least expecting.

4thly. Cherish any Beginnings of the Work of God within you ; encourage Convictions, and do not stifle them : *Quench not the Spirit*, 1 Thess. v. 19. It is a dangerous Thing to quench any of the Motions and Workings of the Spirit of God. Improve any Dawnings of Light upon your Minds ; the Dawning of the Day is a Forerunner of the Rising

Rising of the Sun. If the Lord has made the least Beam of spiritual Light to shine into thy Heart, look out for a clearer and fuller Discovery of the Lord Jesus unto my Soul; sit not down upon any Thing that you think you have attained, but press after Growth in Grace and in the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ: Count not that you have apprehended; but, forgetting those Things which are behind, reach forth unto those Things which are before: And press toward the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus, *Phillip. iii. 13, 14.*

5thly. O be concerned to be well rooted in Christ! *Col. ii. 6, 7. Walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the Faith, as ye have been taught. If you would be rooted in the Faith of Christ, pray for the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of Christ, Eph. i. 17.* Every saving Discovery of Christ unto the Soul, is rooting and establishing unto the Christian; it confirms and strengthens his Faith, *John ii. 11. Jesus manifested forth his Glory, and his Disciples believed on him.* If you would be rooted in the Faith of Christ, let Faith be daily exercised upon him, *1 John v. 13. These Things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God.* If you enquire what is the Meaning of it, when he says, *These Things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may believe, &c.* I answer, it is as much as if he had said, Believe over and over again, believe better than ever you have done, you must ay be exercising Faith upon the Lord Jesus: By the repeated Acts of Faith the Habit of Faith is strengthened; the Eye of Faith grows still clearer the oftner its looks to its glorious Object, *Psalms xxxiv. 5. They looked unto him*

and were lightned. The Hand of Faith is still stronger the oftner it lays hold upon the Lord Jesus.

6thly. Scar not at the Cross of Christ. *If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me.* I warn you of it, that if you would be the Disciples of Christ indeed, you must take up the Cross; the Cross is the beaten Path unto our Father's Kingdom. If you think this a hard Saying, yet I dare say the Cross of Christ looks worse at a Distance than when it is brought near: The nearer the Cross of Christ comes, it is something the lighter and the easier; therefore scar not at the Cross of Christ: Christ himself bears the heaviest End of his own Cross, and he gives all his Disciples a Back for every Burden he lays upon them; Christ and his Cross are above all the sinful Pleasures, Joys and Comforts of the World. The Reproach of Christ is a rich Treasure: *If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon you.* The Cross of Christ is the Way to the Crown, and it is but a short Way you have to bear the Cross: *For our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory,* 2 Cor. iv. 17.

I proceed now, in the *third Place*, to speak a Word unto you all and every one that have a solemn Profession of Faith in Christ; and especially to such of you as have the Faith of our Lord Jesus in Truth and in Reality. Let me exhort you in the Words of the Spirit of God, by the Apostle, in our Text, *Stand fast in the Faith.* I shall offer you some Arguments to inforce the Exhortation, and conclude with some Words by Way of *Direction* and *Advice.* To inforce the Exhortation then, consider, in the

1st

1st Place, The Stedfastness of the Christian in his Faith glorifies God; it honours and glorifies him before the World: All the People of God are Witnesses for God upon Earth, *Isa. xlv. 8. Ye are even my Witnesses.* They ought to bear Testimony before the World, unto the Holiness of God, by studying Holiness in all Manner of Conversation: They ought to bear Testimony unto the Truths of God, by cleaving unto them, especially when any of them are controverted and born down. *To stand fast in the Faith*, and that in the Face of Opposition, glorifies God in an eminent Manner: It is a glorifying of God in a Way that does not and cannot take Place in Heaven: The Saints in Heaven have no Opposition made unto them, for Heaven is the Place of the Saints Rest; there is none to hurt nor destroy in all his holy Mountain. But this Honour have all his Saints upon Earth, that they are called to glorify him in the Face of Opposition, and of strong Opposition made by Satan and the World unto them. *Rom. iv. 20.* it is said of Abraham, *He staggered not at the Promise of God; but was strong in Faith, giving Glory to God.*

2^{dly}. Consider that Faith is a precious Thing. Whatever Way you take Faith, it is precious: If it is taken for the Object of Faith, the Lord Jesus, he is infinitely glorious and excellent in his Person, and precious in the Eyes of all them that believe, *1 Pet. ii. 7.* If by Faith you mean the Principles of Faith, or the Truths that we ought to believe, they are all precious. Truth is a precious *Depositum*, or a precious Trust, given unto the Church and People of God, a Trust given unto them to keep and preserve safe; and if any of the Truths of God are controverted, one Generation

tion should deliver them off their Hands, with a Testimony, to another; this is a Debt one Generation owes to another. We are unfaithful to Posterity, if we suffer any Vail to be drawn over any divine Truth, without a Testimony unto it: *For he established a Testimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Israel, which he commanded our Fathers that they should make them known to their Children,* Psalm lxxviii. 5.

3dly. Ye are under manifold Obligations to stand fast in the Faith. If you have the Faith of our Lord Jesus in Truth and Reality, the redeeming Love of Christ is a strong Bond upon you to continue stedfast in the Faith: *The Love of Christ should constrain you,* 2 Cor. v. 14. The Grace of God, manifested in your effectual Calling, obligeth you to this, *Heb. iii. 6. Wherefore, holy Brethren, Partakers of the heavenly Calling, consider the Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus.* The Vows of God are upon you; your Baptismal Vows bind you to this, as also the solemn Engagements you have professed to come under at the Lord's Table.

4thly. Consider, whatever you may be exposed unto on the Account of your Stedfastness in the Faith, nothing singular befalls you; *For through much Tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom.* Have you Difficulties in the Way? These are the common Fate of all that have gone to Heaven before you: Have you Satan and his Temptations to conflict with? So had they all: Have you an evil Heart of Unbelief to wrestle against? So had they: Have you Violence from the World to encounter with? So had they, *Rev. vii. 14. These are they which came out of great Tribulation, and have washed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.*

Yea,

Yea, not only the Followers of the Lamb, but their Head, Lord and Captain himself had the greatest Difficulties in his Way : *It is enough for the Disciple that he be as his Master, and the Servant as his Lord.*

5thly. Ye have good Furniture provided for you, to enable you to stand fast in the Faith : All the Grace that is in the Lord Jesus your Head, it is laid up in him for your Behoof and Advantage. Are you foolish ? In him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, and the Spirit of Wisdom and Council is given by the Head unto his Members : Are you weak and without Strength ? With him there is everlasting Strength, and he is the Glory of your Strength, *Psalms lxxxix. 17.* Do you want Armour wherewith to fight the Enemy ? He has it to give you, *even the whole Armour of God, Eph. vi. 13.* The Christian's Armour is the *Armour of God*, it is Armour of his framing and making, it is Armour of his giving, it is proven and tried Armour. Do you want a Head ? The Captain of Salvation is in the Field before you : *Your King shall pass before you, and the Lord on your Head, Mic. ii. 13.*

6thly. Consider the many Promises that are given you, to encourage you to Stedfastness in the Faith. Upholding and strengthening Grace is promised you ; and the Promise is given you as an Antidote against all slavish and disquieting Fears, *Isa. xli. 10. Fear thou not, for I am with thee ; be not dismayed, for I am thy God : I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the Right-Hand of my Righteousness.* It is not enough that you make a fair Beginning in the Way of the Lord, but you must also persevere and hold on : *For he that shall endure unto the End, the same shall be saved, Matth.*

Matth. xxiv. 13. *The Righteous shall hold on his Way, and he that hath clean Hands shall be stronger and stronger,* Job xvii. 9. The stedfast Christian is the overcoming Christian, and many Promises are made to the Overcomer: *He that overcometh shall eat of the Tree of Life, which is the Midst of the Paradise of God,* Rev. ii. 7. He shall eat of the hidden Manna; and the white Stone, and in the Stone a new Name written, shall be given unto him, Rev. ii. 17. Yea, he shall be set down with Christ in his Throne, Rev. iii. 21. *He that overcometh shall inherit all Things,* Rev. xxi. 2.

I shall now shut up all with some Words by Way of *Direction* and *Advice* unto you. If you would be stedfast in the Faith, then, 1st. Let not the World get too much Room in your Hearts. The Man that loves the World more than Christ, and the Truths of Christ, can never stand in the Faith. When the Pleasures and Profits of this World, when his outward Peace and Ease, or the like, come in Competition with the Things of Christ, he grips to the World, and to the Things of it, and lets the Things of Christ go: So it was with *Demas*, 2 Tim. iv. 10. *For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present World.* You may no doubt have a moderate Concern and Care about the Things of this Life; you ought to *provide Things honest in the Sight of all Men*, Rom. xii. 17. But many give up themselves to an immoderate Love to the World, under Pretence of a moderate Care about it; and this is both sinful and dangerous; for, *if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him*, 1 John ii. 15.

2^{dly}. Beware of Self-Confidence. If you trust unto yourselves, you cannot stand. *Peter* had too much

much Self-Confidence, when he said, *Though all Men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Although I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.* And that same very Night he got a sad Proof of his own Weakness, when he denied his Master thrice, *Matth. xxvi. 35, 74.*

If you trust unto Grace received, you will readily fall from your Stedfastness, *Psalms xxx. 6, 7. In my Prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy Favour thou hast made my Mountain to stand strong. Thou didst hide thy Face, and I was troubled.*

3dly. Think not any Sin a little Thing. You ought to hate all Sin whatsoever, *Psalms cxix. 104. I hate every false Way.* If a Man begin to think any known Sin a small Thing, he cannot stand, he will soon fall from his Stedfastness.

4thly. Esteem highly all the Truths of Christ. As you ought to think no Sin a little Thing, so neither should you think meanly of any of the Truths of God. No Sin is so little that it ought not to be witnessed against; and no Truth is so small, that it ought not to be contended for. If any of the Truths of Christ are controverted and worn down, let the Opposition made unto Truth en-
dear it the more unto you, *Psalms cxix. 23. Princes also did sit and speak against me; but thy Servant did meditate in thy Statutes.*

5thly. Beware of losing Sight of your Head and Captain the Lord Jesus Christ; keep him in your Eye. Every new Look of Faith unto him brings in fresh Life and Vigour unto the Soul. Live within Sight of him that is invisible. When an invisible God is seen by a Man, all Things else disappear, *Heb. xi. 27.*

6thly. Beware of the Fear of Man: *The Fear of Man bringeth a Snare, Prov. xxix. 25. The Frowns*
or

or Smiles of Men are little to be regarded : *Goats*
ye from Man, whose Breath is in his Nostrils : For
wherein is he to be accounted of ? Isa. li. 22.

7thly. Lay your Account with Tribulations for
 the Testimony of Christ : *In the World ye shall have*
Tribulation, John xvi. 33. If you have been ho-
 nest Communicants, you are resolved through Grace
 to follow Christ, whatever difficult and rough Steps
 may be in your Way : And none of these ought
 to discourage you, for there is that to be found in
 Christ that can counterbalance all Hardships and
 Difficulties, all Losses and Crosses that you may
 be exposed unto, *Rom. v. 3, 4, 5. We glory in Tri-*
bulations also, knowing that Tribulation worketh Pati-
ence ; Patience, Experience ; and Experience, Hope ;
and Hope waketh not ashamed, because the Love of God
is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost which
is given unto us.

8thly. Live upon Christ your living Head and
 Life-giving Root. You need the Supplies of his
 Grace daily. Any Measure of Grace that you
 have received, any sensible Taste that you have
 got of his Love in the Word, or in the Sacrament,
 this Day, will not bear you up, nor carry you
 through under new Straits and Difficulties that you
 may meet with the next Day ; you must have new
 Supplies of the Grace and Spirit of Jesus for eve-
 ry new Duty, and for every new Difficulty. He is
 a Head of Counsel and Conduct unto his Church
 and People : Live then upon him for Counsel and
 Direction under all the Difficulties of your Wil-
 derness Journey. He is also a Head of Strength
 unto you : Go on therefore in his Strength, making
 Mention of his Righteousness, even of his only.
 It is by a constant Communication of vital Influ-
 ences from Christ your Root, that you must stand
 fast

in the Faith ; therefore make Use of him, de-
 ve Furniture and Strength dally from him. *Live*
 continually by the Faith of the Son of God, Gal. ii.

9thly. Beware of the least Declinings from the
 Way of God, 1 *Thess.* v. 22. *Abstain from all Ap-*
pearance of Evil. If you turn aside in the least
 from the Way of the Lord unto By-Paths, you
 may have Difficulty to find the right Path again.

10thly. Put on the whole Armour of God. You
 can never stand unless you have on your Armour ;
 a naked Man falls before the Enemy : You must
 put on your Armour, and likewise handle your
 spiritual Armour. Let Truth in the inward Parts
 be your Guide ; let the Righteousness of your Head
 and Surety be your Breast-Plate ; let Humility and
 Meekness adorn your Steps ; make Use of the
 noble Shield of Faith : Let that Hope that anchors
 within the Vail be your Helmet : Learn to handle
 the sharp two-edged Sword of the Spirit, even the
 Word of God : It is by this that you must make
 your Way through a Host that may encamp against
 you, *Eph.* vi. 13, — 18.

11thly. Be in the Use of those Means by which
 you may be preserved stedfast in the Faith. Read
 the Word of God much ; study to be well ac-
 quainted with the Scriptures ; let your Minds be
 well stored with the rich Treasures of divine Truth
 that are laid up in the Word, *Psalms* cxix. 11. *Thy*
Word have I hid in mine Heart, that I may not sin a-
gainst thee. Meditate upon his Word dally, and
 look to your Remembrancer the Spirit of Promise,
 that he may bring the Words of Christ to your
 Remembrance in the Day and Time of your Need,
John xiv. 26. Watch likewise and pray, lest ye
 enter into Temptation : Pray that he may deliver

your Feet from falling, that you may walk before God in the Light of the Living, Psalm lvi. 13.

12thly. If you would stand fast in the Faith, there are some special Acts of Faith I would recommend unto you. 1st. The rolling and committing Acts of Faith, Psalm xxxvii. 5. *Commit thy Way unto the Lord*; in the Margine it is rendred, *Roll thy Way upon the Lord*: And this is the very same Thing with casting our Burdens upon him, Psalm lv. 22. *Cast thy Burden upon the Lord*. You ought to commit all your Concerns for Time and Eternity unto him, 1 Pet. iv. 19. *Commit the Keeping of your Souls to him in Well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator*. And you may be persuaded of it, that he is able to keep that which ye have committed unto him against that Day, 2 Tim. i. 12. 2dly. I recommend unto you the Exercise of the resting and leaning Acts of Faith, Psalm xxxvii. 7. *Rest in the Lord*; rest upon his Word as good Security for your spiritual and eternal Concerns; rest upon his Word as good Security likewise for all Things that you need in Time; he will withhold nothing that is good from you. Rest upon himself in the Word as your Staff and Stay; even when you walk in Darkness, trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay yourselves upon your God, Isa. l. 10. Lean to him, and depend upon him, in every Step of your Wilderness-Journey, Song viii. 5.

Finally, Let the Grace of Patience be exercised. This is needful for the Christian in order unto his Steadfastness, especially under shaking and trying Dispensations of Providence. Study a patient Submission unto the providential Will of God, and a quiet and patient Waiting for a gracious Issue unto all your Trials and Difficulties, Heb. x. 36. *For you have Need of Patience, that after ye have*

have done the Will of God, you might receive the Promise. Now, may the God of all Grace, who hath called us unto his eternal Glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a While, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen and settle you. To him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever, Amen. 1 Pet. v. 10.

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By

To

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T H E
BLESSEDNESS
L O S T I N
The First *Adam,*

To be found in
CHRIST the Second *Adam:*

Being the Substance of some
SERMONS
O N

PSALM lxxii. 17.— *And Men shall be
blessed in him*—

By the late REVEREND and LEARNED Mr. WILLIAM
WILSON Minister of the Gospel at PERTH.

With a P R E F A C E prefixed,
To the Gentlemen of the *Deistical Principles* in or
about the Burgh of Perth.

E D I N B U R G H,
Printed for David Duncan, and sold at his House,
opposite to the *Weigh-House*, North-Side of the
Street. MDCCLXVII.

Advertisement to the Reader.

THE following Sheets contain the Substance of some Sermons lately delivered, in my ordinary Course of Preaching, in one of our Churches on the Lord's Day. I had not the remotest Intention of making them publick when I preached them; but the following Preface accounts for the Occasion of it.

When the Contagion of Infidelity in Principle, which cannot miss to be attended with Looseness and Profaneness in Practice, is spreading; when the Name of Christ is nauseous to many; when Preaching of Christ is become a Term of Reproach and Contempt, and is cried down as an Engine to drive all rational Preaching, (as they speak) yea, Mortality itself, out of the World; tho' it cannot but be affecting to me, as it is to the most judicious in this Place, that I have any such under my pastoral Charge to deal with; yet I do not grudge to take hold of the Occasion they have given me, to cast in my Mite, in speaking from the Press for him whom Men despise, and whom the Nations abhor, even for our exalted and glorious Redeemer, whose Name shall be remembered with Honour unto all Generations.



TO THE

Gentlemen of the DEISTICAL PRINCIPLES in or about the Burgh of *Perth*.

YOUR *unsubscribed Missive*, sent to my House by an unknown Hand, *Tuesday's* Night before our late National Fast, ye have thought fit to make publick, not only by dispersing your Copies of it both in this Place and in the neighbouring Country, but by spreading them to more distant Places. Your Design is evident and plain ; and therefore I thought myself obliged to take this publick Notice both of you and your Conduct.

As for the malicious Insinuations contained in your invidious *Queries*, wherewith your Paper is swelled, and whereby you slyly attack my Character, I am not afraid that they shall do the least Hurt or Prejudice unto it : And, if you have any Conscience at all, I am persuaded I have a Testimony in your own Breasts, that there is no Truth in any of your wicked and railing Insinuations. Therefore I shall not take any farther Notice of them, than to tell you I am not surpris'd with the Treatment you give me, I am warn'd of it : I have the Honour to be his Servant by Office, who has told me, That *the Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord ; and, if they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub, much more shall*

shall they call them of his Household, Matth. x. 24, 25.

But it is not at me only, it is at revealed Religion, it is at the Gospel through me, that your envenomed Arrows are directed : And tho' you have not the Assurance to come from behind the Curtain, to own your Wickedness, yet you have pulled off the Mask in your Paper, when you declare, that you reckon the Doctrines of the Gospel, which I am honoured and called to preach, are *airy Speculations concerning Faith, mere Phantoms in Religion, which are nowhere to be found but in School-Divinity, or in the Brains of a hot Enthusiast, &c.* It is for this Reason that I have addressed you under the Character I have given you ; and I do not think that I should have done you any Injury, tho' I had designed you *Atheot*, that is, *without God*. Your Wickedness has more aggravating Circumstances in it, than theirs to whom this Character is given by the Spirit of God, *Eph. ii. 12.*

After the manifest Contempt you have discovered of the plain Preaching of the Truths of the Gospel amongst you, I do not think any Thing that is dropt from my Pen will be much regarded by you : Yet I must tell you, that I judge it very applicable to you, what an eminent Divine in the last Age writes concerning Men of the same Complexion with yourselves ; *I know not (says he) whether it were not more for the Honour of Christ, that such Persons would publicly renounce the Profession of his Name, rather than practically manifest their inward Disregard unto him.*

Tho' you have no Regard for me, yet, if you have any for yourselves, the following Sheets contain the Substance of some Sermons delivered on a Subject that deserves your serious Consideration. Your Missive led me to some Enlargements in transcribing

scribing the Copy for the Press; particularly to the Reasonings, in the first three Inferences, with such as despite revealed Religion, and to whom the Preaching of the Gospel of Christ is Foolishness. I was induced, from the two following Reasons, to make them publick; the one is, They contain, as full as was delivered, what I spoke on the Occasion of an *Itinerant*, (from whence he came I know not) who brought to this Place a pretended Picture of our blessed Redeemer in some Part of his Sufferings: And tho' I spoke nothing but what my Duty and Office obliged me unto, yet you have represented me, first in the publick Prints, as preaching Principles that had a Tendency to *Blood and Confusion*, and now, in your Missive, as the Author of a *Riot and Insolence* committed by the Mob, &c. I am well pleased that you have done me the Honour to make me share in the Reproach that your Predecessors in Opposition to the Gospel did throw upon the first and best Ministers of the New-Testament Church, whom they stiled *Deceivers of Mankind*, and such as *turned the World upside down*.

The other Reason that moved me to make them publick is, They contain the Subject I was preaching upon when I received your Missive; and I judged it my Duty to lay before the World a short Summary of the Truths of the Gospel, which I am neither afraid nor ashamed to preach and own, and which you, alter a very bold Manner, have represented, in Town and Country, as *airy Speculations* and *mere Phantoms in Religion*. As it was my Design, in preaching on this Subject, to lead you to Christ for eternal Blessedness, for I endeavoured to declare something concerning the Fulness and Glory of his Person and Mediation, and the Necessity of Faith in him for eternal Salvation; as also, of
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a vital Union with him, that Men may bring forth the Fruits of Holiness, and may yield acceptable Obedience unto God : If these Things are *airy Speculations* and *mere Phantoms* in your Eyes, you despise, and that unto your own Destruction, the Wisdom, Grace and Love of God shining forth in Gospel-Revelation. I am satisfied, that when the several Members of your *Club* were preparing their Revilings and Cursings against me, I was employed in bringing forth the Blessing unto you : But, if you continue to despise the Blessing that was offered you, the Word of the Gospel, which I have preached amongst you, will be Witness thro' Eternity against you.

It will unriddle a great Part of your Missive, when I tell you what is the Spring of all your malicious Resentment against me : It is because I concurred with the *Session of Perth* in their Endeavours to suppress the profane Diversions of the Stage in the School, a Practice that has an evident Tendency to corrupt the Minds of our Youth, and to debauch them in their Morals ; yet the Master of the School did, with a particular Insolence, despise the friendly Advice and Admonition of the Session by their Committee, under a Pretence that he was accountable only to the Presbytery for his Managements in the School : It is because I endeavour to declare from the Pulpit against the overspreading Wickedness and Profaneness of the Age, and those Seminaries of it, or peculiar Incentives to it, which go under the Name of *Assemblies* and *Balls* : It is because I warned the People of my Charge against that Indignity done to the Son of God, by an unknown Stranger his carrying about a pretended Picture of him in his Sufferings for a common Shew : It is because I joined

ed with the *Session* of *Perth* in the regular Steps they took for bringing to a fair and impartial Trial a very flagrant Report of Scandal in the Master of the Grammar-School; and for this the *Session* of *Perth*, the most considerable Body of this Kind in the Bounds of the *Presbytery*, and who are daily wrestling against a Torrent of Profaneness, must be lashed with your virulent Tongues and Pens. It is for the above, and the like Reasons, that you hiss like *Serpents* or *Adders* in the Path against me; and yet you have the Assurance to pretend, in your Missive, a Respect to the Doctrines of Morality: But you have confirmed me, that it is my Duty to hold on in what, by Way of Ridicule, you term *the beaten Path*, even tho' the Reproofs of the World should gall and torment you.

It is like some may think I have paid you too great a Compliment, when I have taken any Notice of you at all; but I assure you, if you continue in your *profane Banter*, I shall never judge it worth my While to make any Return unto you. In the mean time, I sincerely wish you well; and it is my daily Prayer for you, That you may be reclaimed from the Error and Wickedness of your Way.

Perth, Sept. 16.

1735.

WILLIAM WILSON.

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PSALM lxxii. 17.

His Name shall endure for ever ; his Name shall be continued as long the Sun ; and Men shall be blessed in him, &c.

THE Penman of this excellent *Pfalm* is *David*, the Royal Psalmist ; it is the last *Pfalm* that he penned, as you may see from the last Verse: It bears the Title of a *Pfalm* for *Solomon*, and it is probable it was penned when *David* resigned the Government into the Hands of *Solomon* his Son, the History of which you have, 1 *Kings* i. 33. Though the *Pfalm* contains a Prayer for a prosperous and happy Reign to King *Solomon*, yet a greater than *Solomon* is here. *Solomon* was a very eminent Type of the Lord *Jesus* ; he was a Type of him in the Names that were given him ; he was called *Jedidiah* when he was born, that is, Beloved of the Lord, 2 *Sam.* xii. 25. So *Christ* is the Son of his Father's Love, his beloved Son in whom he is well pleased. Again, the Name *Solomon* signifies *Peaceable* ; this Name was given him, because *Israel* enjoyed great Peace and Tranquillity under his Government, 1 *Chron.* xxii. 9. *Christ* is the Prince of Peace ; his Kingdom is a Kingdom of Peace ; all his Subjects enjoy a glorious Peace ; they have Peace with God ; and that inward Peace of God, which passeth Understanding, is one of *Christ's* Legacies unto them ; it is the Royal Gift

Gift and Grant of their King, *John xiv, 22. Solomon* built that stately and magnificent Fabrick, the Old Testament Temple ; *Christ builds the Temple of the Lord, and bears all the Glory, Zech. vi. 13.* He is both the Foundation and Builder of his Church, and he bears away all the Glory from his Type. *Solomon* was famous for his Wisdom ; but all the Wisdom of *Solomon* was only a faint Shadow of him who is the *Wisdom of God*, and in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge. *Solomon* had immense Riches ; but all Fulness dwells in the Person of Christ ; unsearchable Riches are with him, all the immense Treasures of Glory and Grace are in his Hand. It is Christ, the promised *Messiah*, the glorious Antitype of King *Solomon*, who is principally intended in this *Psalms* ; the general Strain of it is so high and lofty, the Expressions are so great and strong, that they cannot be applied to any other : It is only of him that it can be said, *They shall fear thee as long as the Sun and Moon endure, throughout all Generations, Verse 5.* It is he alone who comes down by the Doctrine of his Word, and by the Grace of his Spirit, like Rain upon the mown Grass, as Showers that water the Earth, Verse 6. His Kingdom alone is a Kingdom of Righteousness, and of abundant and perpetual Peace, Verse 7. It is to him that the Promise is made, *That he shall have Dominion from Sea to Sea, and from the River to the Ends of the Earth, Verse 8.* And this Promise gives us Ground to expect a more glorious Enlargement of the Kingdom of Christ : Though his Person and Government are much despised at this Time in the World, and even amongst those who bear the Christian Name ; yet they that dwell in the Wilderness shall bow before him, and his Enemies shall lick the Dust, Verse 9. But, not to insist upon the preced-

ing Part of the *Pſalm*, the Words I have read are a plain Prophecy and Promise concerning the *Meſſiah*, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt ; he was the Object of the Faith, Hope and Expectation of the Old Teſtament Church ; for to him gave all the Prophets Witneſs ; they ſpoke of him as a-coming, they bare Witneſs unto his Perſon, unto his Sufferings, and the Glory that ſhould follow : And, amongſt others, *David* was an eminent Witneſs unto the Perſon of Chriſt, unto his Sufferings and Death, and the Glory that was to follow thereupon. *His Name*. ſays he, *ſhall endure for ever, and Men ſhall be bleſſed in him.* The Expreſſions are too great to be applied to any mere Creature. In the Words then you have a Prophecy, 1. Concerning the perpetuating of Chriſt's Name unto all Generations ; *His Name ſhall endure for ever.* 2. Of the great Benefit and Advantage Men ſhall reap by him ; *They ſhall be bleſſed in him.* And, 3. of the univerſal Subjection of *Jews* and *Gentiles* to his Kingdom ; *All Nation ſhall call him bleſſed.*

The firſt Thing remarkable in the Verſe is a Promise concerning the perpetuating of the Name of Chriſt, *His Name ſhall endure for ever.* What is his Name ? *Prov. xxx. 4.* His Name is ſecret, he has a Name that none knows but he himſelf. His Name is wonderful, his Name is a great Name, he hath a Name above every Name. By his Name we are to underſtand Chriſt himſelf, and every Thing whereby he makes himſelf known unto us ; all the glorious Perfections and Excellencies of his divine Nature are his Name ; all his Titles and Office-Characters that he bears are his Name ; his Word and his Ordinances are his Name : *His Name ſhall endure for ever*, that is, his moſt renowned Fame ſhall be publiſhed and declared in all Ages and Generations.

Generations. He shall never want Heraulds of his Glory, and Trumpeters of his Praise ; *One Generation shall praise him to another :* The Glorious Honour of his Majesty shall be proclaimed, they shall declare his mighty Acts ; *Men shall speak of the Might of his terrible Acts, and declare his Greatness,* Psalm cxlv. 4. 5. 6. Our Lord Jesus got to himself a great Name in the Victory that he obtained over the Power of Darknes, *namely,* over Sin and Satan, over Death, Hell, and the Grave ; he has *triumphed gloriously* over them, and therefore he hath a Name above every Name. The glorious Fame of what he has done, of the Satisfaction that he has given to the Justice of God, of the Atonement that he has made for Sin, of his bruising the Head of the old Serpent, and of the everlasting Righteousness that he has brought in ; the Report and Fame of all this shall endure for ever : He shall be known in all Ages and Generations as *Immanuel*, God with us ; as *Jehovah* our Righteousness, our Peace, our Strength, our Healer, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier ; as our great Prophet, Priest and King ; as the great God our Saviour. It is remarkable, is is said, His Name *shall* endure ; whatever Opposition may be made to this glorious Name, yet it *shall* endure. It has been the great Plot of Hell in all Ages to banish this Name out of the World, or to darken this illustrious and glorious Name ; and the same Design is pursued with all the Rage and Cunning of the old Serpent in the Age wherein we live. The Person of Christ is blasphemed, his Word is reproached and traduced, his Grace is rejected, and his Ordinances are despised : But his Name shall endure for ever ; the divine Glory of his Person shall shine forth brightly from under all the Clouds and Vails that Men endeavour

draw over it ; his Word shall stand its Ground against all the Batteries of Hell ; his Ordinances and Institutions shall be maintained and preserved in his Church ; if Men pervert or corrupt them, he will not want some Witnesses for the Honour of his Name against any Injuries that are done to them ; for a Seed shall do Service unto him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a Generation ; they shall come and shall declare his Righteousness, Psalm xxii. 30, 31.

The next Clause in the Verse is, *His Name shall be continued as long as the Sun.* These Words are very important and emphatick ; our Translators in the Text have followed the *Seventy*. The original Word, which is here rendred *continued*, is not oft used in Scripture ; I shall not offer any critical Commentary upon it, but confine myself to the Translation given us in the Margine, where it is rendred, *He shall be as a Son to continue his Father's Name for ever* : The Father's great Name is continued in the Son ; he is the essential Image of the Father, *the express Image of his Person*, Heb. i. 2. All the essential Attributes and Perfections of the divine Nature are in the Person of the Son ; the Father's great Name is in him, *Exod. xxiii. 21*. Is the Father the supreme, the independent and self-existent God ? So is the Son ; therefore it is said, *He that hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father also ; for he is in the Father, and the Father in him*, John xiv. 10. Again, he shall be as a Son to continue his Father's Name for ever ; that is, the Father's great Name is made known to Men in the Person of his Son, as he is *Immanuel*, God with us : It is in the Face, or in the Person of Christ, that the *Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God* is given unto Men, 2 Cor. iv. 6. That great Name of God,
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The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, is nowhere to be seen, it is nowhere to be read, it is nowhere to be known, but in the Person of the Lord Jesus : The Love, the Mercy, and the Grace of God, are vented upon Sinners only in and through him ; for it is in him that Men are blessed. This is a short Hint at what has been delivered on the first Part of this Verse.

I proceed now to the *second* Part of the Verse, which contains the great and unspeakable Benefit that comes to Men by Christ, *Men shall be blessed in him*. This is the same Promise, upon the Matter, with that which was given to *Adam* immediately after the Fall, *Gen. iii. 15.* and which was renewed to *Abraham*, *Gen. xiii. 3.* and *xxii. 18.* *In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed.* The Apostle *Paul* declares, that this was the Gospel which was preached to *Abraham*, *Gal. iii. 8.* *Abraham* saw the Day of Christ in this Promise, and was glad. This Promise, That *Men shall be blessed in him*, is a short Sum of the Gospel. And in it you may notice, *1st.* What it is that is promised ; it is Blessedness : The Blessedness here promised is spiritual and eternal Blessedness ; it is that Blessedness that was lost by the Entrance of Sin ; it includes all these *spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places* that are bestowed upon all that believe. *2dly.* You may notice where it is that this Blessedness is to be found ; *in him* ; that is, in the Lord Jesus, who is God manifested in the Flesh, and who bears the Character of the second or last *Adam*, *1 Cor. xv. 45.* and *the last Adam is a quickning Spirit*. He bears this Name, because he is the Head of a new Family, who are redeemed from among Men by his Blood, and whom he quickens by his Spirit. But I am afterwards to open up more fully what is imported

reported in these Words, *in him.* 3dly. You may here likewise notice who they are that are blessed in him; they are *Men*; Men shall be blessed: Not the Angels that sinned, but Men; for he took not on him the Nature of Angels, or, *he taketh not hold of Angels, but of the Seed of Abraham he taketh hold,* Heb. ii. 16. He took hold on our Nature, and preserves a Remnant of Mankind from Ruin and Destruction, when all the apostate Angels are shut up under Chains of Darkness. Again, *Men shall be blessed in him*; not innocent Men, or Men that have not sinned, but sinful and rebellious Men. Adam, in a State of Innocence, stood in no Need of Christ the Redeemer and Mediator. He is the Saviour of sinful Men, a Help found out for perishing and lost Men; *He received Gifts for the Rebellious, that God the Lord might dwell amongst us.* Again, *Men shall be blessed*; that is, Men indefinitely, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*. The Words of our Text point at New Testament Times, when *the Blessing of Abraham comes upon us Gentiles*. Under the Old Testament Dispensation, the Revelation and Promise of the Blessing was confined for a considerable Time to one Nation; but now the middle Wall of Partition is broken down, and we *Gentiles* are made *Fellow-Heirs* and *Partakers of his Promise in Christ by the Gospel*, Eph. iii. 6 4thly. You may notice in the Words the Manner how it is promised. *Men shall be blessed*; that is, It is the unchangeable and irreversible Purpose of his Will to bless Men in his own Son the Lord Jesus Christ. When Satan seduced our first Parents into Sin, he no doubt thought he had brought all Mankind into utter and inevitable Ruin, and that he had made them as cursed and miserable as himself. This was the great Plot and Design of Hell: But in the Promise God intimates

intimates his Purpose of Love, whereby the Design of Hell is counterplotted and disappointed ; for *Men shall be blessed in him* ; as if it had been said, The whole Race of Mankind shall not perish, *the Captives of the mighty Power of Darkness shall be taken away, and the Prey of the Terrible shall be delivered.* Satan has done his utmost to ruine them, but I will make my great Power and Grace to be known in the Redemption and Salvation of a Remnant of Mankind, in and by my own Son the Lord Jesus. The Doctrinal Proposition that I offer you from the Words is this ;

That it is in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, that sinful and miserable Men may find spiritual and eternal Blessedness : Or, That the Blessedness that Men have lost in the first Adam, it is to be found in the Lord Jesus the second Adam.

The Doctrine is evident from the Words of the Text ; and, for Explication of it, I shall, in the 1st Place, premise a few Things for paving our Way on this Subject. 2^{dly}. I shall shew you what is imported in the Expression, *In him Men shall be blessed.* 3^{dly}. Give you some Account of that Blessedness which is to be found in Christ. 4^{thly}. Shew you how it comes to be so ; or, why it is that the lost Blessedness is to be found in him. And then, in the last Place, make some practical Use and Improvement of this Subject.

I return to the first general Head, *namely, To premise a few Things.*

1st. When God made Man at the Beginning, he made him happy and blessed : When Man came out of his Creator's Hands, he was blessed with the Image of God ; *Gen. i. 26, 27. And God said, Let us make*

make Man in our own Image, after our Likeness.—So God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him. This Image of God, in which Man was created, was some Resemblance and Likeness which he bore unto his glorious Creator, in Knowledge, Righteousness and Holiness; and this was Man's peculiar Glory and Excellency, to bear the Image of God; he was crowned with this Honour and Glory above all the other Works of God's Hands in this lower World. But this was not all the Blessedness that was bestowed upon him, for God condescended to become a promising God to him; he promised him Life upon Condition of perfect Obedience to his Law; this Condition Man was able to perform without any Difficulty: The Promise of Life upon this Condition is implied in the Threatning of Death in case of Disobedience, Gen. ii. 17. and plainly declared elsewhere in Scripture, Rom. x. 5. When God made a Promise of Life unto Man upon the Condition of his Obedience, he condescended to make him his Friend and Confederate, and here he dealt with him in the Way of a Covenant; this was a higher Degree of Blessedness bestowed upon Man: And indeed the Distance between God and the Creature is so great, that tho' reasonable Creatures do owe Obedience to him as their Creator, yet they cannot expect the Fruition of him as their Blessedness and Reward, but by some voluntary Condescension on God's Part, which he was pleased to express to our first Parents by the Way of a Covenant; and this Covenant is that which is ordinarily called the *Covenant of Works*, wherein the whole Race of Mankind were included and comprehended, the first *Adam* being their common Head and Representative, Rom. v. 12,——20.

2dly. Tho' God made Man blessed, yet he did not abide in this blessed and honourable State : Our first Parents, being seduced by *Satan*, did voluntarily and wickedly depart from God their Blessedness ; they transgressed his Covenant by the Breach of the positive Command that was given them for the Trial of their Obedience, *Gen. iii, 6*. This Sin and Disobedience of the first *Adam* was the Defection of the whole Race of Mankind from God their Blessedness and their Reward ; they all *sinned in him*, and by his Disobedience every one of them are made Sinners, *Rom. v. 12, ——— 18, 19*. Hence,

3dly. The whole Race of Mankind, by their Sin and Rebellion against God, are under his Curse, and obnoxious to his Sin-revenging Justice. When Sin entred into the World, the Curse of the broken Law took hold on *Adam* and all his Family ; for, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them, Gal. iii. 10*. Therefore, tho' God made Man blessed, Man by his own Sin has lost the Blessedness that God gave him, and brought himself under the Curse and Wrath of a righteous and holy God. This is that miserable Estate into which our Apostasy and Defection from God has brought us ; we have forfeited every Thing that is good, and have made ourselves liable unto every Thing that is evil ; we have lost that beautiful and glorious Image of God after which we were created ; we have lost the Favour and Friendship of God ; we have forfeited that Life that was promised unto us in the first Covenant, and we are every one born under the Curse of the broken Law ; we are Children of Wrath by Nature, and, while we are in our natural State, the *Wrath of God abideth on us*.

4thly.

4thly. Though all Mankind are under the Curse, yet the whole Race are not left to perish in this deplorable and miserable Condition; for God has, out of his mere good Pleasure, from all Eternity, elected some to everlasting Life, even some of that apostate and sinful Family: *For whom he did fore-know, them he did predestinate*, Rom. viii. 29. They are predestinate to the Adoption of Children, Eph. i. 5. And it is for this End, that an eternal Revenue of Glory may be given unto God, Father, Son and Spirit, in their Redemption from Sin and Wrath, Eph. i. 5, 6.

5thly. The Blessedness that Men have forfeited by Sin is to be found in the Lord Jesus, and nowhere else; there is no Salvation in any other, and there is none other Name given under Heaven among Men, whereby we must be saved, Acts iv. 12. The Incarnation, Obedience and Death of the eternal Son of God, is the great Mean provided, in his adorable Wisdom and Love, for our Redemption from that Wrath and Curse we are under, and for bringing back unto us the Blessedness that we have lost. But this leads me to

The second Thing proposed in the Method, which is, To open up the Import of the Expression, *Men shall be blessed in him*. It is the Import of these two Words, *In him*, that I am to consider, and there is very much wrapt up in them.

They import, in the first Place, that Christ is the *Treasure-House* of all spiritual and eternal Blessedness unto Men: *In him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. They are hid in him; that is, they are laid up, or treasured up in him: He is made the first Recipient of all that Blessedness that is designed for Men in Time or

or Eternity : All the Blessings that are prepared in the Purpose of God for the Vessels of Mercy, are lodged in the Person of his Son, to be dispensed and communicated by him ; for *it pleased the Father that in him all Fulness should dwell*, Col. i. 19. He becomes the Treasure-House of all spiritual Blessings to Men, three Ways. 1. By his Father's eternal Designation and Appointment. 2. By the Covenant-Transaction with him. 3. By his actual Manifestation in the Flesh,

1st. He is the Treasure-House of all spiritual Blessings by the Designation and Appointment of his Father : He is designed in the eternal Purpose of God to be the second *Adam*, the Head-Representative of a new Family, even of a Remnant of the sinful and miserable Posterity of *Adam*, who were given him to be redeemed and saved by him ; therefore he says himself, *Prov*, viii. 23. *I was set up from everlasting*. He was set up to be the Mediator, betwixt God and Man ; he was set up to be the Centre of Union and Communion betwixt Heaven and Earth ; he was set up to be our Redeemer, both by Price and Power, to be a justifying and sanctifying Head unto us, to bring in an everlasting Righteousness for Justification, and to communicate the Spirit of Holiness unto us for our Sanctification : In a Word, he was set up to be *the Captain of our Salvation*, to bring many *Sons* unto *Glory*, through his Obedience and Death. And, by this eternal Constitution and Appointment, he is become the Treasure-House of all spiritual Blessings to Men ; therefore all the Fulness that dwells in his Person is ascribed to the Sovereign Good-Will and Pleasure of the Father, *Col*. i. 19. and for the same Reason the Elect are said to be *chosen in him*, *Eph*. i. 4. The sovereign Good-Will and Pleasure

sure of God (which admits of no Cause or Motive without himself) is the only Source and Spring of our Salvation. When we are said to be *chosen in him*, the Meaning is, that he is the great Mean found out and provided in the infinite Wisdom of God for our Recovery from Sin and Ruin, and for our obtaining everlasting Blessedness; hence the giving of the Son to be the Redeemer and Saviour is mentioned in Scripture as the Fruit and Effect of the sovereign Purpose of Love to Sinners, *John iii. 16.* and herein the *manifest Wisdom of God* is eminently displayed. If the Wisdom and Love of God, in the Constitution and Appointment of his own eternal Son to be the Redeemer and Saviour, is not believed and humbly adored, it is rejected and despised; and if it is rejected and despised, then you reckon the only Mean that infinite Wisdom hath pitched upon for bringing back Blessedness to Men to be Foolishness; and, if this is Foolishness in your Eyes, your Condemnation must be as inexcusable, as it is certain and inevitable.

2dly. Christ is the Treasure-House of all spiritual and eternal Blessings, by virtue of the Covenant-Transaction betwixt Jehovah and the eternal Son considered as the second *Adam*, is plainly declared in Scripture, *Psaln lxxxix. 3. Zech. vi. 13.* In the Covenant of Works the first *Adam* was considered as a publick Person representing all his natural Seed; God dealt with him as their Head and Representative, he was Trustee for them, their Stock was lodged in his Hands; perfect Obedience was required as the Condition of Life, Death was threatened upon the least Failure: But *Adam* broke this Covenant, he lost the Right and Title to Life, and involved himself and his Posterity into Sin and Misery. In the Covenant-Transaction with the
second

second *Adam*, there is a sovereign Grant of the Father, giving and delivering to his eternal Son, to be redeemed and saved by him, a certain definite Number out of *Adam's* Family, who were beheld lying in the Ruins of Sin by the Breach of the first Covenant. Hence Christ, speaking of them, calls them, The Men given him by the Father out of the World; *Thine* (says he) *they were, and thou gavest them me*, John xvii. 6, — 9. In this Transaction the Son is considered as a publick Person, standing in their Law-Place, Room and Stead, undertaking to do and suffer every Thing that was necessary to save them from Sin and Wrath, and to possess them of eternal Life. More particularly, he undertook to assume their Nature into a personal Union with his divine Nature, and in that Nature to fulfil the Condition of Life; that is, to yield the perfect Obedience that the Law or Covenant of Works demanded as a Condition of Life; also, to bear the Punishment incurred by the Breach of that Covenant, and to endure that Curse and that Wrath that was the Desert of Sin, to die that very Death which by the Law is the Wages of Sin. In a Word; he undertook to redeem, or buy back, at the Price of his own Blood, the forfeited Blessing, and to deliver by the Power of his Spirit the lawful Captives, and to rescue them, not only from the Guilt, but also from the Power, Filth, and Being of Sin, and from the Dominion and Tyranny of Satan. All this you have in the following Scriptures, *Psalms* xl. 6, 7, 8. *Isa.* xliii. 21. Chapter liii. throughout. *Dan.* ix. 24. *Isa.* xlix. 24, 25. As the Lord Jesus, in the Covenant-Transaction with him, was an undertaking Head, so he was also a receiving Head: All the Blessings designed for the elect Sinners were delivered into his Hand.

Hand : He received on their Behalf all the Promises of the Spirit, of Grace and Glory, yea, of every good Thing which they were to receive on the Account of his undertaking for them : Hence it is said, that *Grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the World began*, 2 Tim. i. 9. that is, in him as our Head and Representative. Also *eternal Life*, which includes all the Blessings wherewith Men are blessed in Christ, is said to be *promised before the World began*, Tit. i. 2. To whom was the Promise then made ? To the great New Covenant Head, the Lord Jesus Christ : On account of this Transaction with him, he is designed the Father's *Servant*, Isa. xlii. 1. And, on account of his fulfilling his Engagement, as also because of that Fulness of Grace that is in his Person, and the Fulness of Merit and Virtue that is in his Obedience, in his Death, and daily Mediation, he is declared in the Word of the Gospel to be *given for a Covenant of the People*, Isa. xlii. 6. This Covenant-Transaction is that Bottom and Foundation on which the whole Building of Mercy and Grace stands ; and it is laid open in the Word and Promises of the Gospel, as a Foundation of our Faith and Hope for all Blessedness spiritual and eternal.

3dly. Christ is the Treasure-House of all spiritual Blessings, by his assuming our Nature into a personal Union with his divine : This he did in the Fulness of Time, in consequence of his eternal Undertaking, Gal. iv. 4. John i. 14. *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us*. Who is it that was made Flesh ? *The Word*, that is, the second Person of the adorable Trinity, who is described in the Beginning of this Chapter from his Eternity and Omnipotence, manifested in the creating of all Things. His Manifestation in the Flesh is the
great

great Mystery of Godliness, 1 Tim. iii. 16. If we behold him in the glorious Constitution of his Person, as he is *Immanuel, God with us*, his Name may justly be called *Wonderful*. He is the mighty God, the Father of Eternity, yet *a Child born unto us* : He is God, and he is Man too ; he is God and Man, in two distinct Natures and one Person for ever. The Union of these two distinct Natures in one Person is the Effect of the manifold Wisdom of God, and what we should rather adore and admire than curiously search into ; it is a Mystery that the Angels desire to look with Reverence and Admiration into. By assuming our Nature into a personal Union with his divine, he is become the rich Treasure-House of all spiritual Blessings unto us ; for *in him dwells all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily*, Col. ii. 9. He *received Gifts for Men*, or in the Man, *in Adam*, so it is in the Original, Psalm xlviii. 18. *Grace is poured into the Lips of the second Adam*, Psalm xlv. 2. The Spirit in all his Gifts and Graces doth rest upon him, for *God gave not the Spirit by Measure unto him*. His Disciples, in the Days of his Flesh, *saw the Glory of God in him*, and *beheld him as full of Grace and Truth*, John i. 14. and they acknowledge, that all the spiritual Blessings that they enjoyed, they found them in him, and received them from him ; and every one that believes will make the same Acknowledgment with them, *Of his Fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace*, John i. 16.

Secondly, Men shall be blessed *in him* ; it imports, that he is the Conduit of all spiritual Blessings unto Men : The Grace, the Love, and the Mercy of God, have a Vent upon Men through Christ, and only through him. God out of Christ is a consuming Fire to Sinners ; his Justice, his Holiness,

his

his Faithfulness, are all against the Sinner. And here you may observe, that spiritual Blessings are conveyed unto Men through the Person, Death and Mediation of the Lord Jesus, by the Means of the Word, and by the special Energy of his holy Spirit.

1st. He is the Conduit of spiritual Blessings unto Men in his *Person*. It is in his Person, as he is *Immanuel*, God with us, that we have any comfortable and gracious Discoveries of God; it is only in him that we may look with Hope and Expectation toward God: God comes to us in the Person of his Son in a Way of Grace and Mercy, and in him we may draw near with Hope and a holy Confidence unto God, *John xiv. 6. I am the Way*: He is the Way in which God comes unto us, and the Way in which we may come to God, and there is not another Way. Whatever Discoveries of the Being and Perfections of God are given us by the Light of Nature, yet Nature's Light cannot afford us the least Ground of Confidence or Trust in God for Redemption from the Curse that Sin brings us under, or Deliverance from the Wrath that it deserves: Why, the Light of Nature speaks nothing of the Person of Christ the Redeemer, the only Days-Man betwixt God and us; it cannot inform us of an Atonement for Sin, or any Reparation made of the Dishonour that is done unto the great God, the supreme Ruler and Governor of the World, by the universal Defection and Apostasy of Mankind from him, whereby every individual Person is become a Rebel, yea, is continually rebelling against his sovereign Authority and Government. Likewise the righteous and holy Law discovers unto us the Holiness and Purity of God the great Lawgiver; it informs us that we are Sinners,

and obnoxious to his Wrath ; it both finds us and leaves us under the Curse, but speaks nothing of a Way of Reconciliation unto God : It is only in the Person of Christ, as he is revealed in the Word of the Gospel, that any comfortable Discoveries of the Glory of God are given. In him *Mercy and Truth are met together* ; in him *Righteousness and Peace kiss each other mutually* ; in him all the glorious Exeellencies and Perfections of the divine Nature dart forth the comforting and refreshing Beams of Mercy and Grace ; in him the Faithfulness, Justice, and Holiness of God speak *Peace on Earth, and Good-Will towards Men* ; for *God is in Christ reconciling the World to himself*.

2dly. He is the Conduit of spiritual Blessings to Men in his *Obedience and Death*. The Lord Jesus, according to his eternal Undertaking, did actually in Time substitute himself in the Room of Sinners ; he was made under the Law, he suffered and died in their Room and Stead. In the perfect Obedience of his Life he fulfilled all the Demands of the Law as a Covenant of Works ; and, by his Obedience unto it, the broken Law was *magnified and made honourable* : Greater Honour was done to the Law in the Obedience of the Son of God, than *Adam* by his Obedience could have given, if he had continued in a State of Innocence. Likewise, in his Sufferings unto Death, he bore that Punishment that was incurred by the Breach of the Law, and thereby gave Glory to the rectoral Justice of God, and to his Faithfulness in the Threatning : The Satisfaction that Christ gave unto the Law and Justice of God for Sin and Sinners, was finished and completed in his Death ; and therefore our Redemption and Reconciliation are frequently ascribed unto the Death of Christ in Scripture.

Scripture. By this full and compleat Satisfaction that he gave unto the Justice of God, an offended God is atoned, and an everlasting Righteousness is brought in : The great Surety, having paid all the Debt, obtained the Discharge in his Resurrection from the Dead : He is now ascended into Heaven, and is *set down on the Right-Hand of the Majesty on high*, and conveys all spiritual Blessings thro' this glorious and costly Channel of his Obedience and Death. Redemption from Sin, Reconciliation unto God, and all other spiritual Blessings, flow unto Men thro' the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, *Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 20.*

2dly, He is the Conduit of all spiritual Blessings to Men, by the Means of his *Word*. The rich Treasure-House of all spiritual Blessings is opened up in the Word of the Gospel : The Gospel reveals Christ ; it is a Preaching of him in his Person and Offices, as the great Ordinance of God for our Justification and Sanctification, and for our compleat Redemption and Salvation. Christ, the Treasure-House of all spiritual Blessings, was first opened up in the first Promise, *Gen. iii. 15.* and afterwards to *Abraham, Gen. xii. 3, 18.* After the first Revelation of Christ, the Discoveries of him were like the *Morning-Light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect Day* ; they grew fuller and clearer from Time to Time, till he himself appeared in Person on Earth, and by his Death rent the Old Testament Vail asunder. Under the New Testament Dispensation he is clearly revealed in his Person and Offices : The Glory of his Person and the Blessings that are purchased by him, are unveiled : Every Word, every Offer and Promise of the Gospel, every Command to believe, every Call and Invitation that is given you to come to the

the Lord Jesus, is an Opening up of the rich Treasures of spiritual Blessings that are in him. In this Word that is preached unto you, *Men shall be blessed in him*, all the Blessings that are in Christ are brought nigh unto you, his Righteousness and Salvation are brought unto your Door.

4thly. He is the Conduit of all spiritual Blessings unto Men by his *holy Spirit*. In the blessed Oeconomy of our Redemption and Salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ, the effectual Application of all purchased and promised Blessings is committed unto the Holy Ghost; for this End he is promised, and for this End he is given by Christ: Hence he is called *the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of Christ*, because he gives the saving Knowledge of him, *Eph. i. 17*. Christ is not only revealed by the Word, but he is revealed by the Holy Ghost within the Hearts of all that believe, as the Apostle *Paul* doth express it, *Gal. i. 15, 16*. And, lest any should think that this was extraordinary, and peculiar to the Apostle *Paul*, (though there is no Doubt that *Paul* had an extraordinary Revelation of Christ to fit him for the extraordinary Office and Character that he was to bear) he speaks of a saving Revelation of Christ by the Holy Ghost, as what is common to all that are effectually called, and peculiar to them alone; he expresseth it by the Lord's *shining into their Hearts*, *2 Cor. iv. 6*. This Work of the Spirit, whereby he applies the Redemption purchased by Christ, is his powerful Testimony concerning Christ unto the Souls of all that believe, according to the Promise, *John xv. 26*. *He shall testify of me*. The Word is no doubt the Testimony of the Spirit concerning the Lord Jesus in his Person and Mediation, but the Testimony of God in the Word is also brought

brought home unto the Minds of them that believe, by the supernatural Power and Energy of the Holy Ghost : Hence it is said concerning the *Thessalonians*, That the Gospel came not unto them in Word only, but also in Power, and in the Holy Ghost, 1 Thess.

i. 5. When the Spirit of God brings home the Testimony of God in his Word unto the Heart of a Sinner, the Word carries alongst with it its own Evidence, and all that believe rest upon God's own Testimony in his Word concerning his Son, evidencing itself in its own Light and Power unto their Minds : Hence their *Faith* is said to stand, not in the Wisdom of Men, but in the Power of God, 1 Cor.

ii. 5. The Holy Spirit is also promised to shew the Things of Christ, *John xvi. 14. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* And what is it that he shews ? He shews the Glory and Excellency of the Person of Christ, the Glory that is in his Undertaking and in his Obedience and Death, the Fulness of Merit and Virtue that is in the Satisfaction he gave, the Suitableness that is in all his Offices for the Misery we are under. These and the like are the Things that the Holy Ghost shews : And he shews them, not by the bare outward Revelation of them, but by giving a spiritual Ability to discern and know the Things of God ; *He gives us Understanding to know him that is true*, 1 John v. 20. He creates in the Heart that Faith whereby we are enabled to receive and apprehend the Lord Jesus Christ for our Redemption and Salvation from Sin and Wrath. It is a certain Truth, that none can partake in any of the Blessings that are in Christ, unless they are applied by the supernatural Energy of the Holy Ghost ; and if Men deride and despise his Work, they shall meet with a fatal Disappointment in the End.

End. The Contempt that is cast by many upon the Spirit of Christ, in his special and supernatural Operations, it is a plain Evidence of the Truth of his own Word, 1 Cor. ii. 14 *The natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, for they are Foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

I shall conclude this Head with observing, that there is a beautiful and glorious Order in the Communication of divine Blessings : All the Blessings designed in the Purpose of God for sinful and miserable Men are delivered into the Hands of the Son, they are treasured up in him as the Head of the new Covenant, they are purchased by his Blood, they are revealed and offered in the Word and Promises of the Gospel, and effectually conveyed by the Holy Ghost unto all Christ's spiritual Seed.

Thirdly, Men shall be blessed *in him*, imports the Necessity of an Inbeing in Christ, in order to an actual Participation of the Blessings that are in him. We are every one by Nature in the first *Adam*; and as we are in him, we are under the Guilt and Power of Sin, and consequently under the Curse and Wrath of God : We must needs be cut off from that corrupt Root from whence we spring, and ingrafted in the Lord Jesus Christ, otherways we cannot partake of the Blessedness that is in him. A Branch has no Benefit from a Root, unless it is ingrafted in it. All Communion betwixt the Head and Members results from Union betwixt them. If we have not a vital Union with Christ the living Head, we can have no Communion with him in his Blessings ; if we are not in him, we have no Interest in his justifying Righteousness, nor in his sanctifying Spirit ; if we are not in him, we have not any Right or Title to Glory : Union is the Foundation of Communion, and Communion re-
sults

sults from Union. The Union that we are speaking of, is that which is ordinarily called the *mystical Union*; it is a most close and real Union; it is resembled to the Union that is betwixt a Foundation and a Building, and to the Union betwixt the Head and the Members, and to that which is betwixt the Root and the Branches, yea, to that which is betwixt the Husband and the Wife: But all these Comparisons are only Shadows of that Union which is betwixt Christ and his People; for *he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit*, 1 Cor. vi. 17. The two special Ligaments and Bonds of this Union are the *Spirit* and *Faith*: The holy Spirit is the primary and first Ligament of this Union; he descends from the living Head into the Heart of a Sinner, in his convincing, enlightning and quickning Virtue and Power; and he says unto the dead Sinner, *Live*; and that very Moment in which the Breath of spiritual Life is breathed into the Heart of a Sinner, Faith, the other Ligament and Bond, springs up and takes hold on Christ.

Having touched, on the former Head, at the Necessity of a supernatural Work of the Spirit of Christ, in order unto our partaking of the Blessedness that is in him, let us take a View of Faith, the other Ligament of the mystical Union. It is the appointed and the instituted Mean for uniting us to Christ, and interesting us in his Salvation; it is the only uniting Grace, though, where it is, it is never alone, but has Repentance, Love and all the other Graces attending it: Hence *Christ* is said to dwell in our Hearts by Faith, Eph. iii. 17. On this Account our Justification is ascribed to Faith, Rom. v. 1. Likeways our Sanctification, for the Heart is purified by Faith, Acts xv. 9. Also we are

are said to be *saved through Faith*, Eph. ii. 8. through Faith, as it is the Mean of God's Appointment for interesting us in Christ himself, and in all his spiritual Blessings. The Grace of Faith has a special Aptitude and Fitness in it for this End, for it is a self-denying, a self-emptying, and a self-abasing Grace: It renounceth all Confidence in the Flesh, and leans unto the Lord Jesus Christ alone; it renounceth Confidence in every Thing else beside Christ himself for Deliverance from Sin and Wrath, for Acceptance in the Sight of God, and for a Right and Title unto eternal Life. The Language of Faith is, *In the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength*. Faith credits the Record of God in the Word, concerning his Son, as true; it approves of the whole Plan and Device of Salvation through Jesus Christ, as suited unto the divine Perfections, to the Case of perishing and lost Sinners, and to the Persons own Case in particular, and, upon the Warrant of God's own Word, trusts unto, or rests upon Christ himself for the whole of his Salvation, for Salvation from Sin as well as from Wrath, for Salvation from the Power as well as from the Guilt of Sin, for Sanctification as well as Justification: And this Faith is *not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God*; it is a Blessing promised and given by the Lord Jesus, it is one of the Fruits of his Spirit; hence the Holy Ghost is called the *Spirit of Faith*, 2 Cor. iv. 13. By the Means of the Grace of Faith the mystical Union betwixt Christ and the Believer is completed; and from this Union results that actual Propriety and Interest which all that believe have in Christ himself, and in all the Blessings that are purchased by his Death, and treasured up in his Person, and revealed and offered in his Word: For of him are ye in *Christ Jesus*, who of God is made

made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30.

I proceed now to the *third* Thing proposed for Explication of the Doctrine, which is, To speak of those *Blessings* wherewith Men are blessed in Christ. They are great and many, even *all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places*, Eph. i. 3. And what all these are, what Tongue can declare, or what Heart can conceive? The Riches of Christ are truly unsearchable Riches. I can only give a few Instances of those Blessings that are to be found in him; every one of them have an unspeakable Worth and Excellency in them.

1st. *Justification* in the Sight of God is a Blessing wherewith Men are blessed in Christ; *In him shall all the Seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.* We are every one concluded under Sin; we are guilty before God, and under the Sentence of Death; we have no Merit to purchase, no Moyer to procure Pardon and Remission of Sin; we are destitute of a Righteousness wherewith to appear before a righteous and holy God; our best Duties, and what Men may reckon their most virtuous Actions, when presented before a holy God, they are *all as an unclean Thing*, they are all but *filthy Rags*. In Justification Sin is pardoned, and the Person of the Sinner is accepted as righteous in the Sight of God: When one is justified, he is acquitted and absolved from the Sentence of Condemnation; the Handwriting of the Curse, that was standing against him, is cancelled and blotted out, and he is declared righteous (so to speak) at the Bar: But the Judgment of God is always according to Truth; none can be declared righteous without a Righteousness: But where is this Righteousness to be

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found?

found? With us there is nothing but Guilt and Sin; we must plead guilty at the Bar: The Righteousness, on the Account of which we must be justified, is only to be found in the Lord Jesus; he has brought in a perfect and an everlasting Righteousness, a Righteousness that honours both Law and Lawgiver. Every convinced and self-condemned Sinner, who stands trembling at the Bar, may plead this Righteousness for Justification; and all who take Hold of it by Faith are justified in the Sight of God: *Their Righteousness is of me, saith the Lord, Isa. liv. 17. This is the Name wherewith he is called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUS-*NESS, Jer. xxiii. 6. He bears this Name, that every justified and pardoned Sinner may remain an eternal Debtor to his free Love and rich Grace; therefore let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord.

2dly. Peace and Reconciliation with God. God is in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, 2 Cor. v. 19. We lost the Favour and Friendship of God in the first Adam. When Sin entered into the World, it set God and Man at Variance, it made a great Rupture, a wide Breach betwixt Heaven and Earth; the whole Creation could never have made up the Breach: But the eternal Son of God stooped to stand in the Gap, and to make up the wide Breach; he alone was able for this Undertaking; being both God and Man, he was a meet Mediator of Peace and Reconciliation: He is the only Days-Man, who lays his Hand upon the offended and offending Parties; and he is the only proper Umpire of the Variance between Jehovah and us; *He is our Peace, Eph. ii. 14. He hath made Peace through the Blood of his Cross, Col. i. 20.* And God is to be found in him a God of Grace, and of Peace and Goodwill towards Men.

3dly. Sanctification is only to be found in him, 1 Cor. i. 30. *Christ is made of God to us—Sanctifica-*
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tion. In the first *Adam* we have lost the Image of God, our whole Nature is corrupted and depraved, our Works are abominable: *Their is none that doth Good, no not one.* Where is the Image of God to be found? Or where is Holiness to be had? Only in the second *Adam*, the Lord Jesus: As his Righteousness is imputed to all that believe for Justification, so he is the Fountain-Head and Spring of Sanctification unto them; the Spirit of Holiness descends from the holy Head unto all his Members, when they are united to him: In their Union with him, a Principle of Purity and Holiness is implanted in them; hence they are called *his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works*, Eph. ii. 10. And this Principle of Purity and Holiness infused in them, it is the Image of God restored unto them: It is called the *Washing of Regeneration*, and the *Renewing of the Holy Ghost*, because the Spirit of the living and holy Head begins the Work of Sanctification, in Regeneration; and, as he begins it, so he carries it on by Ordinances and Providences, by the Word and by the Rod, by every Mean of his own Institution and Appointment, till it is complete in Glorification. To conclude this Head, unless Men are Partakers of the Spirit of Holiness from the holy Head, there is no Holiness in any of their Works, there is no Holiness in their Duties, nor in any of their Actions. And do not deceive yourselves, *Without Holiness no Man shall see God*: If you are not holy, you cannot have Communion with him, neither in Grace here, nor in Glory hereafter.

4thly. The *Adoption* of Children is another Blessing wherewith Men are blessed in Christ. By our Apostasy from God in the first *Adam*, we are cast out of God's Family; we have lost the Right of Sonship,

Sonship, and all the Privileges of the Sons of God; we are Strangers and Foreigners to the Family of God : And it is in the Lord Jesus, the Head of the new Family, that the Right is recovered, and the Privileges of Sons restored; hence the Elect are said to be *predestinated unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ*, Eph. i. 5. that is, by him as the Head of the whole Family of God; therefore, *to as many as receive him, to them gives he Power to become the Sons of God*, John i. 12. The Lord Jesus Christ, the second Adam, he is the first and great Heir of all Things, Heb. i. 2. The Right unto the whole of the forfeited Inheritance is in his Person, according to the Covenant-Transaction with him; and *as many as receive him by Faith, are taken in to the Family of God; he gives them Power to become the Sons of God*, that is, he gives them the Right and Privilege of Sonship: For in him, who is the great Head of the Family, they are made Sons and Heirs, even *Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ*, Rom. viii. 17. In him they are Heirs unto all the good and great Things that are contained in the Promise. While you are in the first Adam, you are Children of Wrath, you are Heirs unto the Curse of the broken Law, and the Sin-revenging Wrath of God: It is in the Lord Jesus, the second Adam, that you must be the Heirs of Promise; he has the *Keys of the House of David* in his Hand, *he opens and none can shut, he shutteth and none can open*: He admits into the Family, and keepeth out of the Family, according to his good Pleasure.

5thly. *Access to the Presence of God* is another Blessing wherewith Men are blessed in Christ, Heb. x. 19 *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and living Way which he hath consecrated for us through the*

the Vail, that is to say, his Flesh. When Sin entered into the World, all friendly Intercourse betwixt God and Man was broke up. Sin shut us out from the Presence of God; it stands as a great Mountain, and as a Partition-Wall betwixt God and us: But in Christ this Partition-Wall is broken down, there is a Way prepared for us into the Holiest of all, the Stumbling-Blocks are taken out of the Way, according to the Prophecy, *Isa. lvii. 14, 15. Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare ye the Way, take up the Stumbling-Block out of the Way of my People. For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, whose Name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy Place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit.* God condescends to come down and dwell with Men: Why? the Way is prepared, the Stumbling-Blocks are removed, Justice is satisfied, the Faithfulness of God to the Threatning is glorified, his *Law is magnified and made honourable.* Now God comes to us thro' the Blood of his own Son, and we have Access to him that same Way, even *through the Vail of Christ's Flesh*; that is, through a crucified and slain Christ, we have Access to God with Hope and Confidence of Acceptance in all Duties of Worship; through him we have Communion with God both in Grace and Glory: This is indeed a wonderful Way of Access to God: May we not say of it, *It is the Doing of the Lord, and let it be wonderful in our Eyes?*

6thly. The *Life of Glory* hereafter is a Blessing wherewith Men are blessed in Christ. This Blessing was lost by Sin, and it is only to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. By the *Life of Glory* I understand all that Blessedness and Felicity that is reserved for the Heirs of Promise, even the *Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away,*
reserved

reserved in Heaven for them : This Glory, it is Glory to be revealed ; it is veiled from us in our present State ; for Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of Man, the Things which God hath prepared for them that love him : It is expressed in Scripture by being ever with the Lord, 1 Thess. iv. 17. By seeing his Face in Righteousness, and being satisfied with his Likeness, Psalm xvi. 15. Seeing him as he is, 1 John iii. 2. Seeing Face to Face, 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

7thly. To shut up this Head, God gives himself in Christ unto Men. This is indeed a comprehensive Blessing, it is the Sum and Substance of all other Blessings. When Man fell, he lost Blessedness, that is, he lost God himself ; in Christ God himself is to be found as our chief Joy, as our eternal Blessedness and Reward : This is the great new Covenant Gift and Grant unto us, I will be your God, and ye shall be my People, Jer. xxxi. 33. Behold, then, the Tabernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell with them ; and they shall be his People, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God, Rev. xxi. 3. Jehovah, Father, Son and Spirit, gives himself unto Men in the Person of our great Immanuel, and, through his Death and Mediation, to be their Portion and Inheritance, their Husband and Father, their Blessedness and Glory. O what amazing and condescending Grace and Love is here ! Well may it be said, Men shall be blessed in Christ.

I proceed to the *fourth* general Head, and that is, To enquire how it comes to be so, or why it is that Men are blessed in Christ.

I answer, *1st.* This is intirely owing to the Goodwill and Pleasure of God ; this is the original Spring and Source of the whole of our Salvation:
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There was no Cause, no Motive without himself, that moved him to be a God of Blessings to Men ; we are blessed in Christ, because so it seemed good in his Sight. The whole Work of our Redemption and Salvation by Jesus Christ is ascribed to *the good Pleasure of his Will*, Eph. i. 5. It is *according to his good Pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself*, Verse 9.

2dly. It is for the Manifestation of the Glory of God. This is the great End of all the Works of God ; for *the Lord hath made all Things for himself*, that is, for his own Glory, Prov. xvi. 4. For *of him, and through him, and to him are all Things, to whom be Glory for ever and ever*, Rom. xi. 36. The Work of our Redemption and Salvation, by Christ Jesus, is the chief of the Works and Ways of God, and the Manifestation of his Glory is the Design of this great Work of God ; and the divine Glory shines forth more brightly here than in all the other Works of God. The adorable Sovereignty of God is manifested in blessing fallen Men, and in shutting up the Angels who sinned under Chains of Darkness : Yea, glorious Sovereignty shines forth in bestowing the Blessing upon some of Mankind, while others are passed by. Here there is an unsearchable Depth ; *How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out ? Who may say unto him, What dost thou ?* If any will contend with their Maker, how will they manage the Plea against him ? For all are guilty, all are sinful before him ; and he might have justly dealt with the whole Race of Mankind, as he has done with the fallen Angels. Here the awful Justice of God, the spotless Purity and Holiness of his Nature, and his untainted Veracity and Truth to the penal Sanction of his righteous Law, do all shine forth ; for *God spared not his own Son*. What greater Evidence can there be of the Evil of Sin,

Sin, of God's infinite Hatred and Detestation at it, and of the Excellency and Importance of his Law, than his giving his own Son to be the Propitiation for Sin? As nothing less could vindicate the Honour and Authority of his Law than this amazing Instance of Love, so it was a publick Declaration to the whole World, unto Angels and Men, of the Holiness and Purity of his Nature, and of his inexorable Justice and Equity, as the supreme Rector and Governor of the World. It is one of the Letters of his great and glorious Name, that *he will by no Means clear the Guilty*: His Justice and Holiness cannot admit of Forgiveness without a Satisfaction. Again, the Glory of Grace and Mercy is wonderfully displayed here: An Atonement is made for Sin, and a Satisfaction is given unto the Justice of God, that Mercy and Grace may have an Egress upon Men, to the Honour of the Holiness and Faithfulness of God. Justice and Judgment are the Habitation of his Throne, and Mercy and Truth go before his Face; therefore we are blessed with all spiritual Blessings in Christ, *to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace*, Eph. i. 6. and *that in the Ages to come he may shew the exceeding Riches of his Grace in his Kindness toward us through Christ Jesus*, Eph. ii. 7. Also, what a glorious Discovery is there of the manifold Wisdom of God, in finding out such a proper Mean for our Recovery from Sin and Misery, whereby the Honour of God, his Law and Government are secured, and the highest Glory is brought unto him out of the greatest Evil, even the Sin and Fall of Man, and whereby Man is raised to a State far more glorious and excellent than that in which he was placed at his first Creation? Likeways the personal Glory of God is manifested here; the electing Love of the Father, the redeeming

redeeming Love of the Son, and the applying Love of the Spirit, shine forth in the Contrivance, Purchase, and Accomplishment of our Salvation : These glorious Discoveries, both of the personal Glory of God, and of the adorable Perfections and Excellencies of his Nature, in the Business of our Redemption and Salvation, will be the subject Matter of the Contemplation, Admiration, and Praise of Angels and Men through Eternity.

I proceed now to make some practical Improvement of this Subject. And the first Use may be by Way of *Information* and *Instruction*.

1st. If it is so, that sinful and miserable Men may find Blessedness in the Lord Jesus, and only in him ; hence we may see the miserable Estate and Condition of those who are without Gospel-Revelation ; they know not, neither can they know where Blessedness is to be found ; they are in *Darkness, in the Regions of the Shadow of Death, without God, and without Hope in the World*. The Apostle testifies, that *the invisible Things of God from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead ; so that they are without Excuse*, Rom. i. 20. Yet the wisest and most learned among the Heathen never made that Improvement they might have done of those Discoveries which the Light of Nature gave them of the Being of God, and of some of his glorious Excellencies and Perfections ; they never walked up to that small Light they had : And, in all their pretended Searches after Wisdom, any Knowledge that they had of the supreme Being discovered their gross Ignorance about him ; for *the World by Wisdom knew not God*. How inconsistently with themselves, and with

what Uncertainty, do they speak about the chief Good? They knew not what it was, and generally they placed it in indulging themselves in their carnal and sinful Pleasures. Every one of them were in the utmost Darkness about the Way of Reconciliation to God, and of acceptable Worship, Service and Obedience unto him: Such of them as have commended Virtue, have lived in the grossest Wickedness themselves: Every Thing was reckoned indifferent among them, that did not break Society, or disturb the publick Tranquillity: And none of them knew any higher Origin, from which virtuous Actions spring, than Self-Interest, Self-Appraise, or one's own Honour and Esteem: A Regard unto the Authority, the Honour and Glory of God, never entred into their Thoughts: In all their virtuous Actions, *they sacrificed unto their own Net, and burnt Incense unto their own corrupt Drag:* Therefore, however useful some of their Rules they laid down concerning Morality might be for human Society, yet all their virtuous Actions were nothing but *splendid Sins* in the Sight of God, as an eminent Light in the primitive Church did express himself. This was the miserable State and Condition in which the Gospel did find the *Gentile World*, when it was first published among them, under gross Darkness and Ignorance of God, *vain in their Imaginations, having their foolish Hearts darkned: Professing themselves wise, they became Fools; changing the Glory of the incorruptible God into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, four-footed Beasts, and creeping Things; and giving up themselves to all Manner of Uncleannefs, and to vile Affections.* In a Word, the Gospel found them altogether under the Power of Satan, the God of this

this World, the Spirit that worketh in the Children of Disobedience, Rom. i. 21, 22, 23, &c. Eph. ii. 2.

When I have mentioned the Morality of the Heathens, and the Grounds upon which their Philosophers pled for it, I must here observe, that it is a strong Evidence of the natural Darkeness that is upon the Minds of Men, that under the Light of the Gospel, when God speaks plainly and clearly unto us, Morality should be taught upon no better Foundations and Principles than those upon which the Heathen Philosophers built their Schemes. A Scheme of Morality, which has Self-Interest for its principal and leading Motive, that has no Respect to Christ as its Author and Ground of Acceptance, or to the Glory of God as its End, is plain *Heathenism*. It is too open and evident, that there is a deep Plot of Hell, in the Age wherein we live, to pluck up by the Roots the true Origin, Spring and Ground of all acceptable Obedience unto God, and to bring Men back to Paganism: Hence it is that the Renovation of our Natures by supernatural Grace, a vital Union with the Lord Jesus in order to the bringing forth the Fruits of Holiness in Heart, Life and Conversation, Faith in him for the Acceptance of our Persons and all Duties of Obedience, are Doctrines that are nauseous to the Men of this Age, that pretend to be of a more refined Taste; and hereby they discover that *their Understandings are darkned, that they are alienated from the Life of God through the Ignorance that is in them, and that they have no Taste, no Discerning of the Things of God: Whatever their Pretences to Morality or Wisdom are, yet their Principles have a native Tendency to banish Holiness out of the World, and to introduce Profanity and Looseness in Practice: The Run of Profanity and Lasciviousness through*

through the Land, is one of the Fruits of the loose and corrupt Principles that are vented in the Age. The Men of the Principles that I have named, whatever their Opinion of themselves may be, are no better than their Heathen Predecessors, *without Christ, Strangers to the Covenant of Promise, and without God in the World*, Eph. ii. 12. Yea, their Sin is more highly aggravated, in regard they have the Light the Heathen World had not; and their Judgment and Condemnation will bear a Proportion to their aggravated Guilt and Sin.

2dly. If it is so, that Blessedness is only to be found in Christ; hence see the Insufficiency of natural Religion to lead Men to Happiness and Blessedness. A Set of Men in the present Age, who who have rejected the Bible, or that Revelation that God makes of himself in his Word, and to whom the Doctrine of Christ, and every Thing that concerns his Person and Mediation, is Foolishness, affirm, That there is a Sufficiency in what they call natural Religion, for obtaining eternal Felicity and Blessedness; or, "That the Laws of Nature do ly
 " obvious to the Observation of every Man that
 " inquires with Attention into the Nature of
 " Things, and in themselves are a certain and
 " sufficient Rule to direct rational Minds to Happiness; and our observing of these Laws is the
 " Mean or Instrument of our real and lasting Felicity." From these and the like Principles, that are vented in the present Age, it follows, that there is no Necessity of divine Revelation; if we observe the Laws of Nature, which ly obvious to every Man, we may be blessed and happy without it: And consequently there is no Need of Christ, his Death and Mediation, his Spirit and Grace; if we observe the Laws of Nature, we may be blessed

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and happy without him. Yea, many in this degenerated Age are not ashamed openly to own, that the whole of divine Revelation is an Imposture; that the Gospel is a *cunningly devised Fable*; and that the common Notices that we have from the Light of Nature, of the divine Being and Goodness, are sufficient to conduct Men to Blessedness. These and the like are the Principles upon which the ancient Heathen Philosophers rejected the Gospel of Christ, and, being vainly puffed up with an Opinion of their own Wisdom, looked down upon this blessed Device of Salvation through Christ as *Foolishness*.

Beside what was observed on the former Head, concerning the Ignorance and Darkness that prevailed in the World before Gospel-Light did shine amongst the Nations, is it not plain that all Mankind are Sinners before God? The Heathens themselves have acknowledged it, the Despisers of revealed Religion cannot refuse it: Is not Sin a Transgression of the Law of God? Is it not Rebellion against his sovereign Authority? Is it not contrary to his Purity and Holiness? If it is acknowledged that there is any such Thing as Sin in the World, all this must be acknowledged likewise. Again, if Sin is an insolent Affront offered to the Majesty of God, if there is an irreconcilable Contrariety in it to his holy Nature, the Wisdom, Justice, and Holiness of God make a penal Sanction to his Law necessary, and his Faithfulness pleads for the Execution of the threatened Punishment: Hence it is an important and weighty Question, *Wherewith shall a guilty Sinner come before the Lord, or bow himself before the most high God?* Or, How shall a guilty Sinner stand before him? The Justice, Faithfulness, and Holiness of God demand that the penal Sanction of the Law shall be executed, the Honour of the

the Law and Lawgiver must be maintained : What can give Relief to the Conscience perplexed and distressed under a Sense of Guilt ? What can be a sufficient Plea for the Sinner against the Justice and Faithfulness of God ? Can the Religion of Nature loose the Difficulty ? Can the Laws of Nature inform us of any proper Mean whereby Sin may be pardoned, and at the same Time the Dishonour done to the great God repaired, his Faithfulness maintained, and the Honour and Authority of his Law vindicated ? Nay, if the Conscience is awakned, the Terror and Dread of the righteous and holy Law of God immediately strikes the Sinner ; the Religion of Nature cannot tell him where his Relief is to be found, it cannot direct him to any proper and suitable Mean of Relief : In the present Case, the Sinner, if he could, he would, with *Adam*, flee from the Presence of God, and hide himself from his Justice ; but there is no Possibility of his covering himself from the Eye of God, or of sheltering himself from the Stroke of his Hand : Therefore the last Shift and Resort of the miserable and self-deceiving *Deist*, for quieting his guilty Conscience, is his Notion of the general Goodness of God. God, says he, is infinitely good, and therefore, if we repent of our Sins, that is, if we are sorry for them, and return to our Duty, he will surely pardon and forgive. Not to insist upon the Contrariety that is in Man's corrupted and depraved Nature unto that Sorrow for Sin, and that Return to Duty, that is pretended, and consequently the Impossibility thereof, which may be observed afterwards, the Question at present is about a suitable Reparation of the Dishonour done to God, and what is a sufficient and sure Foundation for Peace unto a Conscience awakned under a Sense of Sin. Is
not

not God infinitely just, as well as infinitely good? Does not his Justice and Holiness require that the Honour and Authority of his Government should be maintained, and that the Sanction of the Law should be executed? What Security has the miserable *Deist* for it, that has alledged that Repentance can be accepted for the Ends and Purposes named? Who told him this? If he says, It is evident from the Goodness of God; it is as evident that the Justice of God pleads for the Punishment. Is he a Debtor for the Egrefs of his Goodness unto any of his Creatures, far less for his pardoning Grace and Mercy to sinful Creatures? It would not be reckoned a sufficient Security for any Government among Men, if Rebels and Criminals in every Case should have a Title to Pardon upon their Repentance; such a Principle as this would unhinge Government, and open a Door for the greatest Disorders amongst Men; the Authority of human Laws could not at this Rate be maintained. Can Men think that their Repentance is a sufficient Atonement for their heinous Rebellion against the Sovereign of Heaven and Earth, or that it is sufficient to maintain the Honour of his Government, and Authority of his Laws?

If Men own their Dependence upon God, and his Authority over them, must they not likewise own that perfect Obedience without Sin is due unto the great Creator? And is it not as true that none can answer this Debt and Obligation that they are under? Therefore, how can we expect to be accepted in that Sorrow for Sin, or in that Return to Duty, which is alledged? Can a Repentance which answers not the Demand of the Law, and our Obligation to Duty, be accepted for itself? And, if it cannot be accepted for itself, can it make an Atonement for any other Transgressions? To conclude

clude this Head, When that Revelation of the only Mean and Way to obtain Blessedness in and by the Lord Jesus Christ, which God gives us in his own Word, is rejected, what Security can miserable Men have for obtaining Peace and Reconciliation with God? Or what can they pretend unto as a sufficient Bottom and Foundation for Peace, Quiet, and Rest to their own Consciences under a Sense of Sin? Yet vain Man, like the wild Ass's Colt, will run himself into the greatest Labyrinths and Difficulties, rather than submit his carnal Reason and Wisdom, which is but Blindness and Folly, to that Revelation which God makes of himself in his Word. The Root of all the Opposition that is made both now and formerly to the Word of God, the Person of Christ, and the Way of Salvation through him, is that natural Enmity that is in the Hearts of Men against God. *The carnal Mind is Enmity against God; for it is not subject unto the Law of God, neither indeed can be, Rom. viii. 7.*

3dly. If it is so, that Blessedness is to be found in Christ, hence see the Excellency and Glory of divine Revelation. Life and Immortality are brought unto Light by the Word of God: The Word informs us where Blessedness is to be found, *Men shall be blessed in him.* The whole Subject of divine Revelation is great, excellent, and glorious; it is such as becomes its Author; it proclaims and declares to Men that God himself is its Author, if they will not wilfully shut their own Eyes against the glorious Light that breaks forth from the Word. The great Design of divine Revelation is to inform us how Sin entred into the World, of the exceeding Evil that is in it, and the Ruin and Misery it brings upon Mankind; and also to declare unto us a Way of Reconciliation unto God, and of Redemption and Deliverance

rance from Sin, and all the dismal Fruits and Effects of it, to the Honour and Glory of all the divine Excellencies and Perfections. The Origin of Evil was a Mystery to the Heathen Philosophers of old : They had some Conviction that Mankind was corrupted and depraved, their own Consciences told them so much, their daily Experience bore Witness unto it, the Miseries and Calamities wherewith they saw Mankind affected were so many Evidences of it : But how Sin entred into the World, they knew not. Both in this, and in every Thing that concerns Deliverance from it, they *groped for the Wall like the Blind, they groped as if they had no Eyes, they stumbled in their Noon-Day as in the Night, they were in desolate Places as dead Men.* But the Word of divine Revelation plainly declares unto us how Sin entred into the World, what Way the whole Race of Mankind are corrupted and depraved, together with all the dismal Effects of our Apostasy from God : Also the Word reveals unto us a Way to Blessedness, wherein God is glorified, wherein all his glorious Excellencies are eminently displayed, a Way that honours both Law and Law-giver, also a Way that is sure and safe for us. The forfeited and lost Blessedness is brought back unto us by the eternal Son of God, who assumed our Nature in a personal Union with his divine, and in that Nature which he assumed gave himself an Offering and Sacrifice for Sin ; and in offering up himself a Sacrifice, he gave Glory to the Justice, Holiness, and Faithfulness of God : Yea, the Glory and Honour that is given by the Redeemer to the Law of God, to his rectoral Justice and Equity, to his Holiness and Faithfulness, is not only equal unto, but greater by far than the Dishonour that is done him by *Adam's* Apostasy from him, and Rebellion against him.

him. If it is considered who he is that gave him self a Sacrifice; he is a divine Person, one who *thought it no Robbery to be equal with God*: The infinite Dignity and Excellency of his Person gave infinite Worth and Value to his Satisfaction, whereby it bore a just Proportion to that infinite Evil and Desert that is in Sin, and was a full Reparation of the Dishonour done to God, his Law, Authority, and Government, by the Entrance of Sin into the World. Here then we may see the Holiness, Justice, and Faithfulness of God shining forth in their meridian Lustre and Glory, when *God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. Justice and Judgment are the Habitation of his Throne, Mercy and Truth go before his Face.* Judgment is executed upon Sin in the Person of the great Surety, who was substitute in the Room of Sinners; Justice is satisfied, and the Law is magnified by him: Hence Mercy vents itself through this costly Chancel, the precious Blood of the Son of God.

As the Way of Peace and Reconciliation to God, through the Death of his eternal Son, brings the highest Glory to God; so it lays a solid Foundation for true Peace, Quiet, and Rest to the Conscience of the convinced Sinner: Therefore it is a Way not only honourable for God, but safe for us. Here the Sinner, convinced of Guilt and Sin, may see that the God whom he has offended, whose Law he has broken, may, notwithstanding of his spotless Purity, his deep Hatred of Sin, his inexorable Justice and Righteousness, and his untainted Faithfulness pledged in the Threatning of the Law, not only pardon and forgive Sin without Prejudice to his Justice and other Attributes, but also that *he is just even in justifying them that believe, Rom.*

iii. 26. Here a Sinner may see a beautiful Reconciliation of seemingly inconsistent Attributes; *Mercy and Truth are met together*: All this gives Ground for a Song, even for an eternal new Song, *Psalms* xcvi. 1. *O sing unto the Lord a new Song; for he hath done marvellous Things. The Lord hath made known his Salvation, his Righteousness hath he openly shewed in the Sight of the Heathen*, that is, in the Sight of the Nations, yea, in the Sight of the whole rational World; the Death of the Son of God being a publick Evidence of his Justice, Holiness and Faithfulness before the whole World, to the Admiration of Angels, and to the Confusion and Terror of Devils, that, through this glorious Chancel of the Death of Christ, the Love, Mercy, and Grace of God might flow down upon Men for their eternal Salvation.

Upon this Foundation and Bottom, the Atonement made for Sin in the Death of the Son of God, whereby the highest Glory is given unto God, *Peace* is proclaimed on Earth, and Goodwill towards Men; Christ is preached in his Person and Offices as the *Salvation of God to the Ends of the Earth*, as the Foundation and Ground of our Access to God, and Acceptance in his Sight, as the great Ordinance of God for Righteousness unto our Justification, and as the Fountain-Head and Spring of all Sanctification. In the Gospel we are told, that Peace with God, the Pardon of Sin, the Adoption of Children, Conformity to the Image of God, Grace here, and Glory hereafter, are all to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. If it is inquired how we may be interested in the Blessedness that is in Christ, the Gospel informs us, that it is through Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, *John* iii. 36. *He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting Life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life, but the Wrath of*

of God abideth on him. Every Unbeliever is under the Curse ; and all that believe, and only they, are interested in Christ, and in all that Blessedness that is in him ; for *he that believeth hath everlasting Life.* Hence all that believe are not only justified, but sanctified also ; the Image of God lost in the first Adam is restored unto them ; a Principle of Purity and Holiness is implanted within them, which inclines to pursue after Conformity to the whole commanding Will of God : They, and they only, return to their Allegiance and Duty to God, for they see the exceeding Evil that is in Sin, and the Contrariety that is in it unto the Authority and Holiness of God, not only in the Glass of the righteous and holy Law of God, but also in the Sufferings and Death of the Son of God. A Sight of Sin in his Death makes them lothe and abhor it, and sorrow and mourn for it as the greatest Evil ; they sorrow and mourn for Sin with a satisfying Rest on the Atonement that is made by Christ, and they turn from it as the worst of Evils ; they become zealous of good Works ; and they evidence the Sincerity, Reality, and Truth of their Faith, in Duties of Obedience both to the first and second Tables of the Law : To this they are daily influenced, from the Authority, Love, Grace and Kindness of God in Christ, and that they may glorify him in their Bodies and Spirits which are his. If it is said, great is the Corruption and Depravation of our Nature, and that there is not only an Inability to believe, but a natural Enmity in us against the Way of Salvation through Christ ; then that Faith whereby we are united to Christ, together with the Renovation of our Natures, and the Sanctification of our Persons, are all of them promised Blessings : Hence the Promise is, *Thy People shall*

be willing in the *Day of thy Power*, Psalm cx. 3. The holy Spirit is promised as *Floods on the dry Ground*; and then one shall say, *I am the Lord's*, Isa. xliv. 3, 4, 5. The new Heart and the new Spirit are promised, with all sanctifying Grace, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. And, in the last Place, the greatest Security is given to all that believe, for the full Enjoyment of all the Blessedness that is promised. Though they are in the Midst of Snares, Dangers and Temptations, they shall not, nay, they cannot lose their Blessedness; they cannot fall totally nor finally away; they have his Word for it, that they shall be kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation, 1 Pet. i. 5. Yea, they have his Oath likewise, *Wherein God, willing to shew more abundantly unto the Heirs of Promise the Immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath, That by two immutable Things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, they might have strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay Hold on the Hope set before them*, Heb. vi. 17, 18. This great Security is given them, not to encourage or indulge them in Sloth, but to quicken and incite them to the Use of all appointed Means, to animate them under Difficulties, to fortify them against Temptations, to embolden them against all the Opposition they may meet with from Satan or his Instruments in the Way of their Duty, and to give them the satisfying Hope of a Glory to be revealed hereafter; as also to let them see that their Standing for Blessedness is upon a more excellent and better Foundation and Bottom than Adam's was when in a State of Innocence, even upon the Bottom of the unchangeable Love of God, the everlasting Covenant of Grace, and the daily Mediation of the Lord Jesus. But, not to insist on this large and extensive Subject, every Thing in the

the Way of Salvation and Blessedness through Christ proclaims, that it is a Device that honours God, and that it is safe and suitable for us. If Men in their Opposition to it should search into the Bottom of Hell for Weapons to fight against it, no Weapon that is formed against it shall prosper : All the Schemes that are set up in Opposition to the Gospel bear a Stamp and Impress of the Father of Lies upon them ; they are inconsistent with themselves, and they fly in the Face of all the moral Perfections and Excellencies of God, and can never afford Quiet or Rest to an awakened Conscience. I conclude this Head with observing, that, though Men should despise his Person, his Word and his Grace, yet the Designs of infinite Wisdom and Love, in the Incarnation, Obedience and Death of the Son of God, shall not, yea, they cannot be disappointed : The utmost Efforts of the Gates of Hell cannot prevail against the Rock of *Israel* ; and therefore, though we should preach Christ crucified a *Stumbling-Block* to some, and *Foolishness* to others, yet unto all that believe he is, and he will be the *Wisdom and Power of God*.

4thly. If it is so, that Blessedness is only to be found in Christ ; hence see, that all that are without a saving Interest in Christ are under the Curse. It is in him that Men have Redemption from the Curse, in him they are justified, sanctified and eternally saved ; if you are out of Christ, you are under the Curse of the broken Law, you are under the Wrath of God, God is angry with you every Day, ye are cursed in your common Blessings, *Deut. xxviii. 16. Cursed shalt thou be in the City, cursed shalt thou be in the Field, cursed shall be thy Basket and thy Store ; cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out, and cursed shalt thou be when thou comest*

comest in. The Plowing of the Wicked is Sin; all that are out of Christ, their best Works are abominable in the Sight of God, though they may in some Cases be profitable to themselves, and very useful to others.

Hence, *5thly.* See the Excellency of Christ. *Men shall be blessed in him,* all Blessedness is to be found in him: He is *Immanuel, God with us, fairer than the Sons of Men;* all Grace is poured into his Lips, *God hath blessed him for ever,* that Men may be blessed in him. Behold him in the glorious Fulness of his Person! All the rich Treasures of Grace and Glory are in him, he is *full of Grace and Truth,* the glorious Conduit of all spiritual Blessings to Men. Who can declare what is in his Person? What Tongue can tell, what Heart can conceive the unsearchable Riches that are in him? All the Glory of God is in the Person of Christ, and all the Glory of Heaven is in him: He is the Blessedness and Glory of the Church triumphant, and the Confidence and Joy of the Church militant; he is the Object of the Wonder, Admiration and Praise of the Redeemed from amongst Men, and of all the holy Angels through Eternity. Behold him in the Fulness of Merit that is in his Death! An offended God is atoned, awful Justice is satisfied; in his Death he trode upon Sin and Satan, he triumphed over Principalities and Powers, he destroyed him that had the Power of Death, that is the Devil; he brings back the Blessing unto us, by bruising the Head of the Serpent, and spoiling the mighty Powers of Darkness, and none but he was Match for them. Is he not then matchless and incomparable? May we not say of him, *There is none like unto the God of Jesurun, who rideth upon the Heaven in thy Help, and in his Excellency on the Sky? The eternal God is thy Refuge, he hath thrust out the Enemy from before thee.*

Deut.

Deut. xxiii. 26, 27. To conclude this Head, you may observe that Christ has all spiritual Blessings for every one of you. *Isaac* had but one spiritual Blessing to give, but Christ has all spiritual Blessings to give : *Isaac's* Blessing was confined to *Jacob*, he could not bestow the very same Blessing on *Esau* ; but Christ bestows all spiritual Blessings upon every one that comes unto him, and there is Room in him for you all, he will not put any away that come unto him.

6thly. If it is so, that Men are blessed in Christ, hence see that all that believe have nothing in themselves wherein to glory : *Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord.* According to the Tenor of the first Covenant, Man was to work for Life, to do for Life, his own Obedience gave him a Right and Title to eternal Life, but Matters are now otherways stated in the new Covenant, all spiritual Blessings whatsoever are the free Gift of God through Christ : That Righteousness, whereby we are justified, is the free Gift of God through Christ ; Faith and Repentance unto Life, the Renovation of our Natures, the Adoption of Children, and Perseverance unto the End, are all the free Gift of God through Christ. In a Word, eternal Life is the free Gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Where is Boasting then ? It is excluded*, there is no Room for it in the new Covenant : Why, in ourselves we are Enemies and Rebels; but in Christ Peace and Reconciliation is given : In ourselves we are guilty, under the Curse and Wrath of God, but in him *we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sin, according to the Riches of his Grace* : In ourselves we are dead, but in him we have Life ; for he is *the Resurrection and the Life* : In ourselves we are dark and blind, but in him we have Light and Sight ; he is Light to them that sit
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in Darkness, and he opens the Eyes of the Blind : In ourselves we are wretched, miserable and naked ; but he is Gold tried in the Fire to enrich the Poor, and a Covering for the Naked : In a Word, in ourselves we are lost, but in him we have Salvation ; for he is *the God of Salvation* : Therefore all the Ransomed and Redeemed of the Lord must needs say, *Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy Name be the Glory* ; yea, they shall through Eternity cast down their Crowns before him, and cry with a loud Voice, *Salvation unto our God who sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb*, Rev. vii. 10.

7thly. Hence see the adorable Condescendence of the Lord Jesus, in stooping to be the Conduit of all spiritual Blessings unto Men. How great is his Condescendence, if we consider, 1. Who he is in whom Men are blessed ? He is *the Son of God* ; this is the personal Character of this glorious divine Person ; he is *the Son*, by eternal, ineffable and incomprehensible Generation ; for, *Who can declare his Generation* ? He is the same in Substance with the Father, *the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person*, equal with him in Power and in Glory. Is it not wonderful Condescendence, that he whose Name is *Jehovah*, who is infinitely blessed in himself, and who stands not in the least Need of any of his Creatures, should stoop to be the Conduit of all spiritual Blessings to Men ? Especially when it is considered, 2. To whom it is that he is the Conduit of spiritual Blessings : They are Men that have rebelled, Men who have broken his Law, and have trampled under Foot his Authority, and thereby have brought themselves under his Curse, and are obnoxious unto his Sin-revenging Justice. Yea, consider, 3. How it is that he becomes the Conduit of all spiritual Blessings unto Men : It is by as-

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suming our Nature into a personal Union with his divine. That the great God should become Man, that Men might be blessed in him, is amazing Condescendence : *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us* ; he was made Flesh, by assuming our Nature into a personal Union with his divine ; and tho' here there is no Confusion of the two Natures, yet the human Nature had never any distinct Subsistence of itself, but from the Moment of his Incarnation did always subsist in a personal Union with the divine Nature, and will do so through Eternity. And this is one Reason, amongst others, why all *Images* and *Pictures* of the human Nature of the Son of God may be justly reckoned an Affront upon his Person, and an Indignity done to the great God our Saviour : But more of this afterwards. And, in the *last* Place, as he assumed our Nature, so he suffered unto Death, that he might be the Conduit of spiritual and eternal Blessedness unto Men. That the Son of God should become Man, is wonderful Condescendence ; that he should be a suffering Man, is greater ; but that he should be made a Curse, that we might be blessed, and that he should die, that we might have Life, is most wonderful : Yet all this was needful, nothing less could bring the Blessing unto us.

I proceed now to a *second* Use of the Doctrine, which may be of *Lamentation*. And here may we not lament over the Contempt that the World casts upon Christ ? *He was despised and rejected of Men* when he appeared in Person upon Earth ; *He came unto his own, but his own received him not* : He was afterwards rejected by the Bulk and Body of the *Jewish-Nation*, when the Gospel was first preached to them by his Apostles ; and therefore *Wrath came*

upon

upon them to the uttermost : He was also rejected and despised by the great Pretenders to Wisdom among the *Gentiles*, 1 Cor. i. 23. *We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a Stumbling-Block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness.* He has been a *Stone of Stumbling*, and *Rock of Offence*, in all Ages and Generations : And how much is he despised in the Age wherein we live ? His Person is undervalued, his Grace is abused, his Word is ridiculed, and his Spirit is reproached. O what Ingratitude is there in the Contempt that Men cast upon him, if we consider that it is he who brings the Blessing to Men, yea, he himself is the great Blessing that is given unto us ! O how great Wickedness is there in it ! When he is despised, all the Grace, all the Love, and all the Mercy of God is slighted : Yea, O what Injury do Men unto themselves, when they reject him in whom alone Blessedness is to be found ! *He that sinneth against him, wrongeth his own Soul.* When Christ is despised, Life is despised, Salvation from Sin and Wrath is despised ; Death, upon the Matter, is preferred to Life, and the Curse is preferred to the Blessing. O what Folly, yea, Madness, is here ! If Men reject Christ, there is not another Way to obtain Blessedness ; for there is no other Saviour, there is no other Redeemer : Therefore all that despise him must perish.

But, since this is the heinous Guilt and Sin of the Age in which we live, I must give you some particular Instances of the Contempt that is cast upon him in whom Men are blessed. And here I lay the Charge of despising the Son of God, our exalted and glorious Redemer, against the following Persons.

1st. He is despised by all such as cast off and reject that Revelation which God makes of his
Mind

Mind to Men in his written Word, or who do not believe that the Scriptures are the Word of God. There are too many in this degenerate Age, who have been baptized in the Name of Christ, and yet have laid aside the Bible : Some of them not only reckon it altogether useless, but even hurtful ; and, instead of regarding it as the Word of the living God, reproach and revile it. But, having spoken to this on a former Head, I shall not enlarge upon it now : Only, all such as despise revealed Religion would know, that, since they reckon the manifold Wisdom of God Foolishness, and that Christ died in vain, they are *treasuring up Wrath unto themselves against the Day of Wrath, and the Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*. It will be no Apology for them, that they have formed their Principles according to their depraved and blinded Judgments ; nay, it will be their *Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and that they have loved Darknes rather than Light*, John iii. 19.

2dly. He in whom Men are blessed is despised by the blasphemous *Socinians*, who refuse that Christ had any Existence before his Birth of the Virgin Mary, and who affirm that he was only a Prophet to teach, and not a Priest to satisfy the Justice of God for Sin ; and that the principal End and Design of his Death was to confirm his Doctrine ; and that he lived and died chiefly to give a Pattern and Example of Patience in suffering, of Obedience to God, and Resignation to his Will. It is a strong Evidence of the Corruption and Depravation of Man's Nature, when such who profess to own divine Revelation, do, after such a bold and daring Manner, attempt to overthrow the very first Foundation of the Christian Faith. Our blessed Lord, the faithful and true Witness, testifies

fies concerning himself, *John viii. 58. Before Abraham was, I am.* He who is a *Child born* unto us, and a *Son given* unto us, is the *Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, or Father of Eternity, Isa. ix. 6.* He who, according to *Micah's Prophecy*, was to be born in *Bethlehem*, his *Goings forth have been of old, even from everlasting, Micah v. 2.* There is no Doubt that in his Life and Death he is the greatest and best Pattern of Obedience and Resignation unto the Will of God: But was this the principal End and Design of his Life and Death, to teach us the Will of God, and to confirm his Doctrine by his Sufferings, or to give us a Pattern of Patience in Suffering, and of Resignation to the Will of God? Nay, if Men will not shut their Eyes against the plain Testimony of God in his own Word, it is evident that the principal End and Design of the Manifestation of the Son of God in the Flesh, was to make an Atonement for Sin, to satisfy the Justice of God, to bring in an everlasting Righteousness for our Justification in the Sight of God, and to give his own Life as the Price of our Redemption from Sin and Wrath, that God might be honoured and glorified in our Salvation; hence it is said, that *he was wounded for our Transgressions, and the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, Isa. liii. 5.* *He made his Soul an Offering for Sin, Isa. liii. 10.* *He was made Sin for us, 2 Cor. v. 21.* *He once suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust, 1 Pet. iii. 18.* *He was made a Curse for us, Gal. iii. 13.* His Substitution in the Room of Sinners, his suffering in their Stead, his making a proper Atonement for their Sins, cannot be expressed in stronger and clearer Terms, than in these and the like Words of the Spirit of God. I shall only observe upon this Head, that when Christ is only preached

preached as a Pattern of Morality, when the main End and Design of his Obedience and Death is overlooked, or but slightly touched at, true Sanctification and Holiness can never be obtained; if the Foundation and Spring of Holiness is neglected, you have an empty Shadow without the Substance, you have the specious Name of Morality and Virtue, and that is all. If Men reject the Atonement made by the Son of God, and will not be obliged to the Merit of his Death for Redemption from Sin and Wrath, they despise the Blessings both of Justification and Sanctification, and consequently of eternal Salvation, that flow through this costly Chancel.

3dly. Christ is despised by the wicked *Arians*, who deny his true and proper Deity. The ancient *Arians* owned that he had a Being before the Creation of the World, and that by him God created the World, but would not allow him to be co-eternal and co-essential with the Father; they denied that he was the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory with the Father. Our modern Refiners upon the *Arian* Scheme pretend to speak more honourably of him than their Predecessors did, yet they will not allow him to be the *supreme*, the *self-existent*, and the *independent God*; and truly, if he is not self-existent and independent, he is not God, but a mere Creature: But his Name is *Jehovah*, that is, the *self-existent* and *independent Being*; he is *the Lord of Hosts*, *the whole Earth is full of his Glory*: The Seraphims cover their Faces with their Wings before him, and cry one to another, *Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah Tzebaoth, the whole Earth is full of his Glory*, Isa. vi. 3. *These Things said Esaias when he saw his Glory, and spake of him*, John xii. 41. He is *Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the*

*the Ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty, Rev. i. 8. He is the First and the Last, and besides him there is no God, Rev. i. 11,—17. with Isa. xliv. 6. His absolute Eternity, Self-existence and supreme Deity, cannot be expressed in plainer Terms : And, if he were not the supreme God, his Satisfaction could have born no Proportion to the Indignity and Dishonour that is done unto God by Sin ; it would not have had Merit, Worth, or Value in it to make an Atonement for Sin : But he is *Jehovah, God over all blessed for ever* ; and therefore our sure and all-sufficient Help is in his great Name.*

4thly. He in whom Men are blessed is despised by the Popish Church. The whole Doctrine of Popery is levelled against the Offices, the Word, and Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ : That universal Headship that the Pope of *Rome* claims to himself over the House of God, is an Evidence that he is that *Antichrist*, who, *as God, sitteth in the Temple of God, opposing and exalting himself above every Thing that is called God, 2 Thess. ii. 4.* Their Doctrines concerning the Imperfection of the holy Scriptures, the Authority and Necessity of unwritten Traditions, as also the Infallibility their Church claims to herself, and that blind Subjection that is required from all her Members to her Decrees and Canons, are all so many Evidences that their Church is antichristian. Their Doctrines concerning the Merit of good Works, concerning Penance for Sin in this Life, and a Purgatory after this Life, are opposite to that only and abundant Merit that is in the Death of Christ, to the Fulness of Virtue and Efficacy that is in the Satisfaction he gave to the Law and Justice of God, and contrary to the Freedom of Grace manifested in the Justification of a Sinner

ner before God, on the Account of the Righteousness of Christ imputed and received by Faith alone. If our Persons are accepted, either in Whole or in Part, on the Account of any good Works done by us ; if any Thing done by us by be reckoned in the least satisfactory for Sin, then the Doctrine of Justification and Salvation by the free Grace of God is quite overturned ; for, *if by Grace, then it is no more of Works, otherways Grace is no more Grace*, Rom. xi. 6. But I shall not now insist on these Things ; I only observe at the Time, that the Popish Doctrine concerning *Images* or *Pictures* of the Lord Jesus is highly dishonourable to him. I have already noticed, that all *Pictures* of Christ are an Indignity unto his divine Person. Some of you, it is like, may say, May we not have a Picture of the human Body of Christ, to bring him to our Remembrance, as we remember our absent or deceased Friends by their Pictures ? But, is there not a vast Difference betwixt that Remembrance you ought to have of Christ, and the Remembrance you may have of any absent or deceased Friend ? Ought you to have any Remembrance of Christ but what is religious ? that is, Ought you to have any Remembrance of him but what includes supreme Love to his Person, Confidence and Trust in him for spiritual and eternal Blessedness, and also Gratitude and Thankfulness to him for what he has done and suffered ? This is what you will readily acknowledge, if you are consistent with your Christian Profession. But you will say, May we not have a Picture of him to excite to this religious Remembrance, though we do not worship the Picture ? If you think so, then you and the Papists are agreed in this Point : They expressly refuse that they worship Images or Pictures ; they are not so mad as to affirm that there

is any Divinity or Virtue in them, for which they ought to be revered or adored : Nay, say they, " We make Use of Images or Pictures of Christ " to assist us in our Devotions, to excite in us a " more lively Remembrance of him, and to raise " our Affections unto him." See the Bishop of *Condom's* Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, *Seff. 5.*

But an *Image* or *Picture* of Christ, for religious Ends and Purposes, is the Idolatry forbidden in the second Command. The first Command directs us to the Object of Worship, namely, *J E H O - V A H* the true God, who is one God in three Persons ; the second Command directs us to the Means of Worship, namely, all such Ordinances as he has appointed in his Word : The first Command forbids us to worship any other but the true God ; and the second Command forbids us to worship the true God by Images, or any other Way not appointed in his Word. It expressly forbids all Images or Pictures of any Thing in Heaven or in Earth, as assisting or exciting Means of our Devotion, and that because God is a *jealous* God : Therefore all Images and Pictures of Christ, for exciting a religious Remembrance of him, are an Abomination in the Sight of God. If you inquire where it is that you may see Christ, I answer, Christ is set before you, crucified, in the Word and in the Sacraments ; these are the Ordinances of his own Institution and Appointment : And, if ever you get a saving Sight of Christ, it is only in his own Ordinances that you can see him ; for it is not with the Eye of Sense, but with the Eye of Faith, that a crucified Christ is seen, *2 Cor. v. 7*——*16.* His own Institutions are the only as well as the most sufficient Means for giving us the saving Knowledge of him,

and for exciting our Love to him, and our Confidence and Trust in him; therefore all Images and Pictures of Christ are only an imaginary Christ, and a gross Delusion. Let me then advise you to be concerned to get a spiritual View of the Glory that is in a crucified Christ, as he is set before you in the Ordinances of the Gospel: If Men lose once a spiritual Sense of the Things of God, and spiritual Views of Christ in his Person and Sufferings, they are ready to substitute in the Room thereof *Images, Pictures, or Paintings* of Christ, to gratify their carnal Senses; and this is the true Origin and Spring of all that Idolatry and Superstition that for so long a Time has been the Sin and Plague of the Christian World.

5thly. All carnal Representations of Christ and his Sufferings, for a profane or common Use, are a high Contempt of the Person, Death, and Mediation of the Lord Jesus. If it is an Abomination in the Church of *Rome* to frame Images or Pictures of him for a religious Use, is no less an Abomination to carry about a *pretended Picture* of Christ in his Sufferings, to expose it as common Shew for Money, under a Pretence of shewing a fine Piece of Paint; this is a most profane Prostituting of the sacred Mysteries of our holy Christian Religion: I am bold to warn you against such an abominable Practice; it is, with a Witness, a *trampling under Foot the Son of God*, and a *counting the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith we are sanctified, an unholy or common Thing*.

6thly. Christ is despised by them who do not believe on him, or who receive not the Testimony that is given in the Word concerning him. All who do not receive Christ into their Hearts, who do not submit unto his Government, and who do not study Conformity to him in their Lives, de-
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spise him. The Charge, as it is now laid, is the epidemick Sin of this Generation; it is the Sin of this Generation, it is the Sin of this Congregation. Have we not Reason to say, *Who hath believed our Report? To whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?* You have enjoyed the Word of the Gospel for a considerable Time; but some are more hardned under the Means of Grace, and others are altogether indifferent and unconcerned about the Blessing that the Word of the Gospel brings unto them; they prefer the World, their Trade, or their Merchandise, to Christ and the Blessedness that is to be found in him, like those mentioned, *Matth. xxii. 5.* Some deceive themselves with a presumptuous Hope and Confidence in themselves, and others are wearied of the Gospel; they lothe the Doctrines and plain Truths of the Gospel, as the *Israelites* did the Manna in the Wilderness. Too many give up themselves to open Profanity and Wickedness, while others content themselves with an external Profession, and an outward Attendance upon the Ordinances of the Gospel. Know, that if you do not receive Christ into your Hearts, if you do not receive the Testimony of God in his Word concerning his Son, if you do not embrace him in his Person and Offices, as he is offered to you in the Word and Promises of the Gospel, you despise and reject him; and if you despise and reject him, you reject the Blessing, you prefer Death to Life, you prefer Destruction and Misery to eternal Felicity and Blessedness. And, for a Conclusion to this Head, may I not ask at you, What ails you at Christ? *He is altogether lovely, he is fairer than the Sons of Men, a Name is given unto him above every Name, that Men may be blessed in him.* What ails you at the Way of Salvation through Christ?

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Is it not a Way that honours and glorifies God, and a Way that is safe for you? What ails you at the Righteousness of Christ? Is not all your own as filthy Rags? Can you present any Thing that you can call your own before a holy God, as the Ground of your Acceptance in his Sight? Is not the Righteousness of Christ a sufficient, as well as the only Ground for the Justification of a Sinner before God? What ails you at the Government of Christ? Is not his *Yoke easy*, and his *Burden light*? *His Commandments are not grievous*: All the Commands of the moral Law are the Commands of a God in Christ unto his People; and that Obedience unto them which springs from Faith, and is influenced by the Love of Christ, is both Pleasantness and Peace; for *Wisdom's Ways are Pleasantness, and all her Paths are Peace*, Prov. iii. 17.

I proceed to a *third Use* of the Doctrine, and it is by Way of *Exhortation*. If it is so, that Blessedness is to be found in Christ, then I exhort you all, and every one, to come to him for the Blessing. I shall offer a few Things by Way of Motive. And, 2. A Word by Way of Direction unto you. And, to move you to come unto him for the Blessing, consider, 1st. All that Blessedness that is to be found in Christ is offered unto you: In the Word of the Gospel that we preach unto you, all the Blessings of the new Covenant are brought unto your Door, they are spread before you; *Thus saith the Lord, Incline your Ear, and come unto me; hear, and your Souls shall live; and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure Mercies of David*, Isa. lv. 3. God doth earnestly call and invite you to come and partake in the Blessedness that is to be found in Christ; his awful Authority

is interposed, commanding you to come unto him for the Blessing ; *This is his Commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ,* 1 John iii. 23.

2dly. Consider to whom it is that the Blessing is offered : My Text tells you that it is unto Men ; *for Men shall be blessed in him.* God comes as a God of Blessings in his Christ to sinful and rebellious Men ; *Unto you, O Men, I call, and my Voice is to the Sons of Men,* Prov. viii. 4.

3dly. Consider what is the Blessing that is offered unto you : It is no less than God himself ; he gives himself in Christ unto you ; *I will be your God, and you shall be my People.* And with himself he gives Salvation and Deliverance from Sin and Wrath, and the eternal and beatifick Vision of himself in Glory ; all this is offered unto you : What would you have more, or what can you desire more ?

4thly. Consider the Worth and Excellency of the Blessings wherewith Men are blessed in Christ : They are most excellent, and most valuable ; if they are compared with all other Things, they will be found to excel them all. (1.) The Blessings that are to be found in Christ are *substantial* Blessings. All Things in this World are at best but a Shadow, a *vain Shew*, Psal. xxxix. 6. But the Blessings that are to be found in Christ are a substantial Portion and Inheritance, they that inherit them, *inherit Substance*, Prov. viii. 21. They are substantial Food to the Soul ; *Eat ye that which is good*, Isa. lv. 2. Hence, (2.) the Blessings to be found in Christ are *Soul-satisfying* Blessings, they afford abundant Satisfaction. The World, and the best Things in it, can never satisfy the Desires and Expectations of the Soul ; but all such as are blessed

sed in Christ, are satisfied with his *abundant Grace*, with the *Goodness* of his House, even of his holy Place, Psalm lxxv. 4. They are satisfied as with Marrow and Fatness, Psalm lxxiii. 5. (3.) The Blessings that are to be found in Christ are sure and certain; they are called the *sure Mercies* of David, *Isa.* lv. 3. All other Things are uncertain; *Riches take Wings and fly away*; one may be rich to-day, and poor to-morrow; you have every Day Instances of the Uncertainty of all Things in this World: But such as are blessed in Christ can never be deprived of their Blessedness; the Blessings wherewith they are blessed are in a sure Hand, they are kept by the Lord Jesus: Yea, he himself is their Blessedness; therefore, take from the Believer what you will, you can never take his Portion from him; for his God is his Portion: Whatever the Believer may lose, he can never lose his Treasure, Christ is his Treasure; *Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ?* Rom. viii. 35. (4.) The Blessings that are to be found in Christ are *eternal*, 2 Cor. iv. 18. If a Man should enjoy all the good Things that this World can afford, Death deprives him of them all, it makes a Separation betwixt us and every Thing in Time; but the Blessings that are to be found in Christ go through Death with the Believer: Yea, the full Enjoyment of that Blessedness which is promised unto him, is in that *better Country*, the *heavenly*, which lies beyond the Line of Time.

5thly. Consider all the Blessings that are in Christ are freely given. You have nothing but Poverty and Misery, but the good Things that are treasured up in Christ, are given out freely to wretched and miserable Men: Pardon of Sin is the free Gift of God, eternal Life is the free Gift of God, all the Blessings

Blessings purchased by Christ are Blessings of Grace unto you, you may have them *without Money and without Price*, Isa. lv. 1. *Whoſoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely*, Revel. xxii. 17. Finally, if you are not blessed in Christ, you must remain under the Curse, and under the Wrath of God; you shall die under the Curse. and you must needs ly under the Wrath of God for ever. Whatever you may think of it now, you shall know in a little, to your woful Experience, that the Threatnings of God's Word are not mere *Scarcrows*, and that the Wrath of a Sin-revenging God is not a Matter of Jest: *It is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.*

I shall conclude this Head with a few Words by Way of Advice unto you. If you would be blessed in Christ, *1st.* Seriously consider your miserable State in the first *Adam*, and that, while you are in a natural State and Condition, you are under the Curse and under the Wrath of God. Atheism lies at the Root of all the more open, or more secret and hidden Contempt that there is, amongst Men, of Christ, and the Way of Blessedness through him; it is the Spring of the Indifferency and Carelessness that is amongst the most Part of the Hearers of the Gospel about their eternal Salvation. Did Men really believe that they are by Nature under the Curse and Wrath of God, did they believe the Justice and Holiness of God, and the Desert of every Sin, they would readily value and prize the Revelation and Offer of Blessedness that is made unto Men through the Lord Jesus Christ. *2dly.* See your Inability to come unto Christ for the Blessing. Some reckon it an easier Matter to believe than to practise; such, I am sure, are Strangers both to saving Faith and sound Practice: Saving
Faith

Faith in Christ is above the Power of Nature, it is the Fruit of the *exceeding Greatness of divine Power*, it is the Effect of that *mighty Power which wrought in Christ when he was raised from the Dead*, Eph. i. 19, 20. And without Faith there can be no Soundness in Practice. It is the first Principle of any acceptable Obedience unto God, either in the Duties of the first or second Table of the Law; for *without Faith it is impossible to please God*, Heb. xi. 6. If ever you come to the Lord Jesus for the Blessing, you must be convinced of your Unbelief; and a thorough Conviction of Unbelief is the special Work of the holy Spirit, *John xvi. 8*. If you are convinced of your Unbelief, you will not only see your Inability to believe, but also the Enmity that is in your Heart against the Way of Salvation through Christ, *Rom. viii. 7*. 3dly. Wait carefully upon the Ordinances of the Lord's Institution and Appointment; *Faith comes by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God*. The Blessing is promised in his own Ordinances, and it is in them that you may expect to find the Blessing, *Exod. xx. 24*. *In all Places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee*. In the last Place, Pray for the Blessing from him. Prayer is a special Mean of his own Institution and Appointment for obtaining the Blessing: All the Blessings of the Purchase of Christ are freely promised and freely given; the Grace of Faith, as we observed before, whereby we are interested in the Blessedness that is to be found in Christ, is likewise a promised Blessing: And this may encourage you to look, to wait and pray for the Spirit of Faith; and if you are seeking the Spirit of Faith, under a Sense and Feeling of your Unbelief, ye are in the Way to obtain it.

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I proceed to the *last* Use of this Doctrine; and it is in a Word to such as are Partakers of that Blessedness that is in Christ. And here I shall, in the *first* Place, give some *Characters* of them. 2. Offer some Things for their *Consolation* and Encouragement. And, 3. conclude with a few Words by Way of *Advice* unto them.

In the *first* Place, I shall give you a few *Characters* of them that are blessed in Christ.

1st. If you are blessed in him, ye have seen yourselves under Sin, and under the Curse and Wrath of God by Nature; the Spirit of God has convinced you both of Sin and Misery: You have seen the Sin of your Nature, and of your Way; you have seen yourselves Sinners in the first *Adam*, and that you are *Transgressors from the very Womb*; ye have seen that your Life has been one continued Series and Tract of Rebellion against God; you have seen Sin in its exceeding Sinfulness; you have seen it in its Contrariety unto the holy Nature of God, and consequently that you are loathsome and vile before him; ye have seen Sin in its Contrariety unto the Authority of God expressed in his Law, and consequently that you are guilty before him, and that you are not only obnoxious unto everlasting Wrath, but also that you deserve nothing but Wrath, and that he is righteous, just and holy, tho' he should condemn you; you have seen that all your Duties are as an unclean Thing, that all your own Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags, and that you can do nothing at all for your own Help and Recovery from that Misery and Ruin that Sin has brought you under, and that, if you are saved, your Salvation must be by the free Grace of God alone through Jesus Christ. In a Word, every convinced Sinner, who has come unto the Lord Jesus for the Blessing, sees the Evil of Sin,

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and also the high Desert of it ; all Confidence in himself is beat down, his lofty Looks are humbled, the Haughtiness of his Heart is made low ; he lothes himself before the Lord for his Iniquities and his Abominations, *Isa. ii. 12—17. Ezek. xxxvi. 31.*

2dly. If you are blessed in Christ, you have a spiritual Inbeing in him, through the Faith of the Operation of God. Many of you are joined to the Lord Jesus only by an outward Profession ; you are baptized in the Name of Christ, you attend upon his Ordinances, you have some common Knowledge of the Principles of Religion, and make an outward Subjection unto Christ : But, if these are the only Ligaments and Bonds wherewith ye are joined unto him, ye have no Part as yet in the Blessing, ye are Strangers unto him, ye are amongst the Branches that shall be taken away as withered and useles, who are gathered in the End and cast into the Fire, and are burned, *John xv. 2—6.* If you have any real and spiritual Inbeing in Christ, the Spirit of the Lord has taken the *Face of Covering from off you*, he has, by the Means of the Word of the Gospel, *shined into your Hearts, and given unto you the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus*, *2 Cor. iv. 6.* You have got a Discovery of Christ in the Glory of his Person, and in the Suitableness of his Offices, as a meet Saviour and Redeemer for you ; and your Souls have echoed back to the Gospel-Revelation of Christ, *In the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength. I count it a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ came to save Sinners, of whom I am the Chief.* In a Word, you approve of the whole Plan of Salvation thro' Christ, as a Device full of infinite Wisdom and Love, as a De-
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vice that honours and glorifies God, and that is suitable and safe for you ; you rest upon the Person and Mediation of Jesus Christ for Salvation from Sin in its Guilt and Filth, and also in its Power and Being ; you rest upon him for Deliverance from the Wrath to come, for Acceptance in the Sight of God, for a Right and Title to eternal Glory, and for the actual Fruition and Enjoyment of whatever is contained in the everlasting Covenant.

3dly. If you are blessed in Christ, you will esteem him highly yourselves ; and it will be your Desire that he may be exalted and honoured by others : I say, you will esteem him yourselves. If he is despised by them that believe not, if he is a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offence unto them, yet *unto them that believe he is precious*, 1 Pet. ii. 7. They prefer and esteem him above all other Persons and Things whatsoever. Likewise, it will be your Desire that he may be exalted and honoured in the Congregation and Place where you live, and you will readily lay out yourselves, in the several Stations in which you are placed, to honour and glorify his Name ; you will desire that he may be exalted in the Land wherein you live ; yea, you cannot but cry out with the Psalmist, in the Words following our Text, Blessed be his glorious Name for ever, and *let the whole Earth be filled with his Glory ; Amen, and Amen.*

4thly. If you are blessed in him, then you will study Conformity to his Image. It is one of the distinguishing Characters of all that are blessed in him, that they are *conformed to his Image*, Rom. viii. 29. And this is no small Part of that Blessedness wherewith Men are blessed in Christ, as you heard. All that are blessed in him, they are renewed in the whole Man after the Image of God, Eph. iv. 23.

24. They are made *Partakees of the divine Nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. They have an inward Principle of Purity and Holiness implanted in them, and it is their Endeavour daily to die unto Sin, and to live unto Righteousness, to advance in Sanctification and Holiness, till the Top-Stone is set upon the Work in Glory. If you are conformed unto the Image of Christ, then you will love the whole Law of God, because of its Purity and Holiness; you will hate every false Way, because of its Contrariety to the Holiness and Authority of God; indwelling Sin will be your daily Burden, you will maintain a daily Conflict and Fight against it, you will make Christ your Pattern and Example, you will daily pursue after Conformity to your holy Head, and you will thirst after Deliverance from the Inbeing of Sin, and after that consummate and complete Sanctification and Holiness, which, according to his Promise, you shall shortly attain unto; for he will *present all his Members unto himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing, but holy and without Blemish*, Eph. v. 27.

I proceed, in the *second Place*, unto a Word of *Consolation* and Encouragement unto all that are indeed blessed in Christ, and particularly to you who can lay Claim to the Characters just now given. Whatever discouraging Providences you may be tried with, whatever Difficulties you may be under, whatever your Afflictions or Troubles may be, yet you have Ground for strong Consolation. For,

In the *first Place*, If you are blessed in Christ, your Blessedness is well secured unto you. Your great New Covenant Head is Trustee for you; he is not only intrusted with all the Concerns of his Father's Honour and Glory, but also with all that concerns you for Time and Eternity; neither De-
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vils nor Men can pluck you out of his Hand, *Job* x. 28. *I give unto Them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.* The first *Adam* lost the Stock of Blessedness that was put into his Hand, and thereby ruined himself and all his Posterity ; but the second *Adam* is the mighty God ; what his Father put into his Hands shall be surely and safely kept ; and what you have committed unto him, he is able to keep against that Day, viz. the Day of his glorious Appearance, *2 Tim.* i. 12.

2dly. If you are blessed in him, you are blessed in any Thing that you have. If you have but little in the World, there is a Blessing in it ; *A little that a righteous Man hath, is better than the Riches of many wicked.* There is a Blessing in all your Losses, and in all your Crosses ; whatever cross Winds of Providence may blow in your Face, they are designed for your Good ; whatever Losses you may meet with, they are for your Good ; for *all Things shall work together for Good to them that love God,* *Rom.* viii. 28.

3dly. If you are blessed in Christ, you can never be accursed. *Satan* and his Instruments may curse and revile you, but they cannot hurt you ; if they malign and revile you, reckon the Reproach of Christ your Crown and your Glory : *If you are reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are you ; for the Spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon you,* *1 Pet.* iv. 14. You are safely sheltered and covered from the Curse of the Law, and from the Sin-revenging Justice of God, under his Shadow who is *the Lord our Righteousness* : The Curse of the Law can never take Hold on you, it is a Hand-Writing that is cancelled and blotted out ; *for there is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ.* In a Word, you have

have Ground for that holy Gloriation and Boast of Faith, *Who shall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the Right-Hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us,* Rom. viii. 33. 34.

4thly. If you are blessed in Christ, you shall be blessed in your Death; *Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord,* Rev. xiv. 13. You must die as well as others, but Death will be a Blessing unto you: Death is disarmed of its Sting, and is a Friend unto all them that are in Christ; it is a Messenger sent to bring them to the Possession of that perfect and complete Blessedness that is reserved for them. Are you blessed in Christ? Then Death will put a Period to all your Doubts and Fears, to all your Temptations and Trials; it will set you free from all the Remains of Sin, it will bring you unto the immediate Enjoyment of God himself, who is your everlasting Glory and Blessedness. Hence,

In the *fifth* Place, You shall be blessed after Death. The Souls of Believers are at their Death made perfect in Holiness, and they pass immediately into Glory; you shall then pass into the immediate Fruition and Enjoyment of God, you shall see him as he is, you shall be with him where he is, and shall behold his Glory, *John* xvii. 24. You shall pass into the immediate Worship and Service of God, for *there his Servants shall serve him,* Rev. xxii. 3. You shall pass into an everlasting Freedom from all Sin, all Sorrow, and all Trouble: *God shall wipe away all Tears from your Eyes, and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain,* Rev. xxi. 4.

6thly. You shall be blessed at the Day of Christ's glorious Appearance. He who suffered and died, and

and who rose by his own Power from the Dead, and who is now set down on the Right-Hand of the Majesty on High, will come again from Heaven to Earth with Power and great Glory: *Surely, says he, I come quickly, Rev. xxii. 20.* The Day of his Coming will be a terrible Day to his Enemies, and to the Enemies of his Church and People: It will be the Day of his righteous Vengeance on *Satan*, and on all the wicked and ungodly: But it will be a Day of Blessings unto you that are interested in him; you shall then be raised up in Glory, your *vile Bodies* shall then be *changed*, and shall be *fashioned like unto his glorious Body*; your glorious Head, in whom you are blessed, will openly acknowledge and own you as his, before his Father, and before the holy Angels, yea, before the Devils, and before all the wicked and ungodly World; he will in like Manner openly acquit you from every Accusation and Charge that Law and Justice may give in against you, and from all the Reproaches that *Satan* or his Instruments may throw upon you. You are now justified and pardoned; but then the Sentence shall be published and declared before all the World: *Every Tongue that riseth in Judgment against you shall be condemned.* Then will he say unto you, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World, Matth. xxiv. 34.*

I conclude this Subject with a few Words by Way of *Advice* to such as are Partakers in the Blessedness that is to be found in Christ.

And, in the *first Place*, be concerned to honour him in whom ye are blessed. He is a glorious and honourable Person, yea, he is infinitely excellent and glorious: A Name is given him which is above every Name that is named, both in this World,

World, and in that which is to come. You are under the strongest Obligations to honour him; he humbled himself, he veiled the Glory of his divine Person, and made himself of no Reputation for a Time, that you might be blessed in him: Should you not then lay out yourselves to honour and glorify him? If you inquire what Way you ought to glorify him? I answer, Be concerned for his declarative Honour and Glory in the World; appear for him in the several Stations in which you are placed; be neither ashamed to own his despised Members, nor to confess any of his injured Truths; beware of grieving his Spirit, and study universal Obedience to his Law; let your Esteem of his Person increase and grow the more that you see him undervalued and despised. I know not if in any Period, since the Dawning of Reformation-Light in *Scotland*, more Contempt has been cast upon the Person, upon the Offices, upon the Word and the Spirit of Christ, than in the Age wherein we live. Is not that blessed Book, the Bible, the Object of the Scorn and Ridicule of many? Is not his Person rejected, and his Grace-despised? Are not the special Operations of his blessed Spirit reviled? But, if he is a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence unto others, let him be more precious in your Eyes, let your Love to him grow; for he is worthy to be loved, he is infinitely glorious, and altogether lovely: And, if you can do no more for him, be affected with the Dishonours that are done unto him; mourn in secret for the Dishonours that are done him in *Scotland*, and in the Place and Congregation where you live.

adly. If you are among those who are blessed in him, then live upon him who is the inexhaustible Treasure-House of all spiritual Blessings: Let all
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your Hopes and Expectations centre in him: Trust him with what concerns you for Time and Eternity: Make Use of that Fulness of Grace that dwells in his Person; he has new Blessings to give you every Day; he *giveth liberally, and upbraideth not.*

3dly. See that you *glory in his holy Name.* You have Ground for a holy Boast and Gloriation in your blessed and glorious Head; glory in him as your Strength for every Duty, and under every Difficulty; glory in him as your justifying Righteousness, under whose Shadow you are sheltered and saved from the vindictive Wrath of God, and in whom you have Access with the Boldness of Faith into the Holiest of all. In a Word, glory in him as the God of your Salvation; he will be your All and your Glory through Eternity: *Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord, 1 Cor. i. 31.*

4thly. Be concerned for others, that they may be blessed in him. Come with your Families unto him for the Blessing; bring your Children and Servants unto him, that he may bless them; pray for the Congregation wherein you live, that many in it may be blessed in him; pray for a Blessing on your Neighbours; yea, *bless them that persecute you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.*

Finally, Give Glory to him in whom you are blessed: Bless his holy Name; all and every one in all Nations, who are blessed in him, *shall call him blessed.* When he blesseth us, he makes us blessed, he communicates his Blessings unto us: But he is infinitely blessed in himself, he can receive no Addition to his Blessedness; and therefore, when you are called to bless him, and to give Glory unto him, you are called to declare his Glory, to acknow-
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ledge what he is, and what he has done for you : And who is sufficient for this Work and Exercise ? For who can shew forth his Praise ? Who can declare his Glory ? Yet you ought to mint at it ; it is what you ought to endeavour to do. Are you blessed in him ? O then give Glory to him, and bless him ; acknowledge with Heart and Tongue that he is infinitely blessed in himself, and that your Goodness cannot extend unto him. Give Glory to him, by declaring his glorious Excellencies and Perfections : Bless him, by acknowledging yourselves Debtors to his sovereign and free Love, and his rich and abundant Mercy and Grace : And though you have much Reason to complain that you have neither Hearts nor Tongues for this spiritual Exercise, yet the Time is coming, when you shall, without a jarring Note, or mistuned Heart, join the heavenly Quiristers, who cry out with a loud Voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing. And let every Creature which is in Heaven, and on the Earth, say, Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever, Rev. v. 12, 13.*

F 7 I N T S.

BOOKS sold by John Henderson in Abernethy.

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